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The Editors
BEHIND BARS
CENTRAL AMERICA
'ON HUMAN WORK'

ONE DOLLAR
OCTOBER 9, 1981

"Catholics in this country do not differ with the views of the Moral Majority on most issues. . . . Pope John Paul is on our side and the people are on our side. . . . If we didn't know the pope agrees with us . . . we Catholics in the New Right would have serious conscience problems. I would never be working counter to the church's

THE RIGHT TO FIGHT

official position. It's the American bishops who are doing that. The fact is that they're hypocrites, pretending to speak for the Catholic church when all the time they're undercutting the teaching of the pope."

—Paul Weyrich
New Right leader

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REAGAN'S LUCK, SO FAR
William Lee Miller

Correspondence

An attitude of charity

Mission Viejo, Calif.

To the Editors: Like most other sane, responsible people I am opposed to abortion on principle; like most people I am also opposed to pointing the finger at other people who are faced with difficult decisions I have not been asked to make. Has the editor who wrote so cavalierly on "Triage in the Womb" [July 31] ever spent a lifetime caring for a severely handicapped child? Would the editor or editors care to volunteer to take such a child (if it had not been aborted) and raise it as theirs? Have they spent any time at all caring for and supporting any child?

I read previously of the bishops' condemnation of the woman in this same case—and I pictured them, having made such a pompous pronouncement, going comfortably back to their before-dinner martinis and forgetting about the grief, despair, anguish, and tears that must be a daily partner of those who live with such children.

My four children, thank God, were all born normal, healthy, and reasonably intelligent, and I am beyond the childbearing age so the problem with me is wholly academic. Still I can feel for those who have the problem and feel nothing but compassion and sympathy. I would like to see such an attitude of charity on the part of those who have made charity (I think) their public profession. An old Indian saying: "Do not criticize, rebuke, or condemn your brother until you have walked a mile in his moccasins," sums up Christ's message of dealing with our neighbors' problems.

FRANCES HASTINGS

A parent's view

Davenport, Iowa

To the Editors: "Triage in the Womb" in your July 31, 1981 issue brought tears to my eyes. Thank you for commenting so sensitively on this awful event.

Contrary to your comment in the article, it seems to me that this "exsanguination" was not a front page event but was buried in the back pages — at least in the newspapers that I read.

I have a daughter with Down's Syndrome. It occurs to me that we parents should strengthen our efforts to demonstrate to the public that although our children may be "sub-normal" in their ability to reason abstractly, they are most normal in their ability to enjoy life and give joy to others. It is a terrible fear of the unknown that compels a mother to take the life of a child in her own womb.

MARGARET M. DELUHERY

An absolutist politic

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: "Triage in the Womb," an editorial published on July 31, exemplifies the pomposity of an absolutist politic.

In the situation described in the article, tests revealed that a woman pregnant with twins was carrying one fetus with Down's Syndrome. After much soul searching, the parents decided that they could not go through with the agony of giving birth to a child who might never achieve self sufficiency—who might never read, write, dress, or feed him/herself. So they terminated the pregnancy.

What distinguishes the case is the fact that the other twin was not touched during the procedure and was subsequently born—a healthy, male baby.

No one forced this family to terminate the unwanted pregnancy. Rather, they were allowed to follow their consciences and make a choice abqut how to live their lives. While other couples might have chosen childbirth—and be applauded for their courage—this couple's right to make a choice without the absolutism of church or state intervention is at stake if the heavy-handed manner of *Commonweal* is made into law.

Few issues—and certainly not abortion—are black and white. Here, however, we meet our need for certainty head on, for the quest for absolutes, for certainty, for a right and wrong, permeates the politics of abortion.

Despite our tendency to objectify, simplify, and compartmentalize, the facts belie the tendency. Religious and nonreligious women alike will have abortions whether they are legal or not. Public opinion will, regardless, condone the practice.

What may be "cold blooded murder" to *Commonweal* is a compassionate and sensitive action to others. The only certainty is that we will never have unanimity on this issue. It's high time we recognize that and work, instead, on mutual tolerance.

ELEANOR J.BADER

Coordinator, NY Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights

Arms control lesson

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: In his "Principles of Abolition: Eight Reasons for Getting Rid of the Bomb" [July 31], Thomas Powers describes cogently the irrationality of the nuclear arms race and the complete irrationality of nuclear war. While favoring continued arms *limitation* efforts, he then examines the idea of abolishing nuclear weapons altogether.

Much as I would like to believe this possible, I cannot really envision the abolition of these weapons in the world as we know it. Nevertheless, it seems to me that Mr. Powers's eight points argue equally well for a more limited goal, one which is definitely attainable: the resumption of American leadership in nuclear arms control negotiations.

To give us some degree of security for the future, these negotiations must simultaneously pursue *two objectives*: a safer

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THEY DO A PRISON MAKE

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR is now installed as the first woman on the Supreme Court, and that venerable institution will soon begin issuing opinions in its new term. One direction that we hope will be changed — though we do not have much hope that Justice O'Connor will help do the changing — is that taken in one of the Court's last decisions before its summer adjournment, a ruling on prison life. Stating that "harsh" conditions are the price of crime, the justices voted 8-to-1 that prison overcrowding *per se* is not forbidden by the Constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishment — specifically that two prisoners may be confined in a cell designed for only one as long as the overall prison conditions do not violate a "contemporary standard of decency." Thus the ruling sets new limits on the power of federal judges to order sweeping prison reforms, as they have done in many states. "The Constitution does not mandate comfortable prisons," Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. wrote in an opinion joined by four others; it does not require meeting "an aspiration toward an ideal." In trying to determine what in fact would constitute cruel and unusual punishment the majority opinion rejected the argument of prison reformers that overcrowding and harsh conditions are unconstitutional because they go far beyond the punishment mandated by the prisoner's jail sentence. If conditions breach "the contemporary standard of decency," Powell wrote, they may be cruel and unusual. "But to the extent to which such conditions are restrictive and even harsh, they are part of the penalty that criminal offenders pay for their offense against society." And the level of comfort in prisons should be determined by state legislatures and prison administrators, he said, not the courts, although the courts have the duty to "scrutinize claims of cruel and unusual punishment."

It is hard to fault the five-man majority opinion about the details of the particular case they were considering. It involved the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, an institution found by the federal District Court to be "unquestionably a top-flight, first-class facility," with adequate food, medical care, sanitation, and library resources. The prison is equipped with gymnasiums, workshops, school rooms, chapels, a hospital ward, recreation field, and a library. The double occupancy involved in the case occurred in a cell that is approximately eight feet by eight feet with hot and cold running water, a 36-by-80-inch bed, heating and ventilation, a shelf, a flush toilet, a cabinet-nightstand, and a built-in radio. Many of the cells have windows. Putting a bunk bed and a second man into such a cell is not ideal, but surely the Court had reason to say that it hardly violated constitutional standards. The problem, however, is that the decision is likely to be taken as a sweeping invitation for courts to keep their hands off prison conditions, and the prison in Ohio that was considered in this case is one of the best in the United States. Conditions there are unfortunately a long way from being typical.

Federal standards call for a prison capacity of sixty square feet per inmate—about

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the size of three doors laid flat. This is a standard more violated than observed; even the much praised Southern Correctional Facility involved in this case was thirty-eight percent over its intended capacity at the time the suit was brought. Far worse overcrowding can be found in state after state, usually in prisons where the primitive environment offers a striking contrast to conditions at the modern Ohio institution. In Texas, for instance, three thousand prisoners were forced to sleep on the floor in overcrowded cells until the state finally had to put up tents to house some of the overflow. Twenty-three other states are under court orders to relieve comparable conditions in their own prison systems and in ten more states similar court challenges are pending.

Current estimates are that eighty-five percent of all prisons in this country are seriously overcrowded. In the past ten years the prison population has increased by sixty-three percent, straining what Chief Justice Warren E. Burger has described as the "nineteenth-century penal institutions" that exist in this country. In many prisons, cells built for one prisoner hold as many as five, and this without the amenities found in Ohio, forcing many of them to sleep on the floor as in Texas and immeasurably increasing the potential for violence. And there should be no mistake about it: violence is what such overcrowding breeds, from forcible assault and rape to the kind of rioting that took place recently in Michigan and Hawaii and last year in New Mexico where thirty-three persons were killed.

Such uprisings testify to the horror of life inside America's prisons, and experts predict there will be more in the days ahead. They will surely prove to be right if this Court decision in any way serves to lessen the pressure for change on state legislatures and prison administrators. That is why three of the Supreme Court justices, while agreeing on the decision in this particular instance, nonetheless in their separate opinion made a strong case for judicial intervention. "Today's decision should in no way be considered as a retreat from careful judicial scrutiny of prison conditions," wrote Justice William J. Brennan Jr. for himself and two colleagues. We concur, heartily.

As Chief Justice Burger said last december: "To put people behind walls and bars and do little or nothing to change them is to win a battle but lose a war. It is wrong. It is expensive. It is stupid."

On this at leat we agree with the Chief Justice.

I GOTTa BReaK OUTTa THIS CRAZY PLACE... I'LL GET MY GIRL-FRIEND TO BAKE a LAYER CAKE WITH a FILE HIDDEN INSIDE...
UH... MAKE THAT a SHOEHORN
MARGULIES
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GOOD NEWS OF WORK

Reading papal encyclicals is an acquired taste, and John Paul II's "On Human Work" will not make it any easier to acquire. This encyclical is long and quiet in tone. It marks no sharp break in papal social teaching. It is almost devoid of ringing phrases, the kind that can decorate a banner or be slung against an opponent in a debate. For these reasons, the initial attention given to any major papal statement may soon subside, leaving "On Human Work" to the exegetes, the Vaticanologists, and the professional churchpeople.

That would be a shame. "On Human Work" is a rich and thoughtful document in which the present pope gives his own special emphasis and elaboration to the ninety-year tradition of papal teaching on the "social question." Three of the encyclical's themes stand out:

- The human person is an image of God, and human work is an image of God's creativity. For the pope, the primary way of viewing labor is from the point of view of the laborer—how it allows him or her to realize personal dignity as someone who can act upon the world ("subdue the earth") in a creative, conscious, and free way. The pope is not unconcerned with problems of remuneration and the maldistribution of the goods produced by labor—in other words, of the problems faced by workers as consumers—but he always returns to the notion of the worker as *active agent*. From this flows the right of workers to join together, to protect themselves, to make decisions about their own work and their futures. By implication the pope is saying that workers' rights would be no less compelling even if a benevolent corporation or commissar provided for their material needs.
- The second, and related, theme is "the priority of labor over capital." Echoing Marx's image of capital as congealed labor, John Paul II points out that the modern means of produc-

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tion are themselves "the historical heritageof human labor."

Opposed to both these affirmations is what the pope calls "materialistic economism," an outlook that treats work as just another thing ("labor power" or "work force") to be bought and sold like "merchandise." In effect this "economistic" outlook treats work as "solely an instrument of production" and thereby gives priority to capital—a "capitalism" in the literal sense, a repetition of the fundamental "error of early capitalism," regardless of the label under which such "a reversal or order" currently parades.

These two themes also lead the encyclical through a subtle discussion of ownership. Rejecting both an absolute right of private property and a system of bureaucratic centralization, the pope strongly endorses efforts to extend the role of workers in owning and managing their enterprises.

• The third theme running through the encyclical is that work is a social endeavor and can only be rightly understood and organized in the context of social groupings. The simple skills or scientific knowledge that workers bring to their tasks, the technology they use, are all inherited from past generations. Work not only supports family life; family life is the "first school of work," where education and industriousness begin. The larger society and the nation provide the human identity and cultural values that inform the worker's efforts and are, with the whole global family, the setting for understanding the "common good" to which all work should contribute. Autonomous, intermediate bodies are the best basis for making workers part-owners of "the great workbench" on which they work with everyone else. Unions are not only needed to secure and defend workers' rights but to encourage and implement workers' training and education, so that "union members will not only have more, but above all be more." Like previous popes, John Paul rejects the Marxist elevation of class conflict. In doing so, he notes, "It is characteristic of work that it first and foremost unites people. In this consists its social power: the power to build a community."

That "On Human Work" is no abstract philosophical exercise can be seen by the way various contenders in the American debate over our national and international economic policies have seized upon parts of the pope's message: The *Washington Post* contrasted the pope's insistence on the obligations of the rich nations with the administration's efforts to limit World Bank economic aid. Others noted as immediately relevant the pope's concern with the ravages of unemployment, the need of workers for medical assistance, sufficient pensions, and a safe workplace. But "On Human Work" cuts even deeper and wider than these particular items might suggest.

Consider the current concern with *productivity*, a concern central to the administration's case for giving breaks to corporations and the wealthy and for rolling back government regulation of the environment and workplace. "On Human Work" warns against conventional ways of thinking about and measuring productivity. We cannot simply devise ways of getting more things into the production process in order to get more things out of it—with the worker as an intermediary factor, as "human capital," at best, in the process. No, the most important product of work *is the worker*, and only with that in mind can a society really judge whether it is improving or degrading "productivity."

It is in the most explicitly theological portions of the encyclical that John Paul II becomes eloquent. Work is toil and suffering, but it is the way in men and women collaborate in God's creation and Christ's redemption of this human world. This is the "gospel of work," a phrase recurring throughout the encyclical. The good news of work—for how many people is that "good news" still so far from being a personal reality?

THE CRITIC, R.I.P.

T.S. Eliot, John Courtney Murray, Ivan Illich, Arthur Koestler, Flannery O'Connor, Martin Luther King Jr., François Mauriac, Andrew Greeley, Daniel Berrigan, Brian Friel, Tom Wolfe, Agatha Christie, Frank O'Connor, Wilfrid Sheed, Walter Kerr, Hans Küng—one could fill an entire page simply listing the distinguished writers who populated the pages of *The Critic* magazine during its heyday. But a journal is more than the sum of its parts, and no list of authors can evoke the special spirit of *The Critic*. That spirit was the creation of Dan Herr, president of the Thomas More Association, which sponsored the magazine, and Joel Wells, *The Critic*'s editor. *The Critic* was thoughtful, serious, and impudently mischievous. One suspects that its faithful readers much sooner forgot what Arnold Toynbee wrote there than the pages devoted to St. Fidgeta, the patron of twitchy, itchy children, or the cartoons puncturing religious pomposities of all sorts. *The Critic* was born as "Books on Trial" in 1941 and finally died, another victim of rising expenses, this summer. But the magazine's prime years were the decade before and the decade after the Vatican Council. It was essentially a magazine of transition from one kind of church to another, and future scholars will discover that at least in one place that difficult transition was carried off with intelligence, grace, and wonderful good humor.

OLIGARCHS, OLD & NEW

"The day the Administration decided to support the government of Guatemala," said former ambassador to El Salvador Robert E. White recently, "was, in effect, the day it wrote 'finish' to any serious reform in the rest of Central America. . . ." White is of course one of many Latin American front-line diplomats quietly purged by the Reagan team in recent months. The purge itself, we think, is deeply disturbing. It recalls the vengeance for "losing China" of the fifties. And it suggests that ideological fanaticism against domestic liberal rivals has more to do with shaping foreign policy than any realistic appraisal of, in this case, Central American realities.

Secretary Haig's authoritarian friends should be causing him sleepless nights. Even more than El Salvador, Guatemala may be the test case of U.S. Central American policy. Unlike Salvador, U.S. investment there is substantial, to the tune of

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$221 million. The country is potentially rich in oil and nickel. But thanks in part to a C.I.A. overthrow of the reformist Arbenz government in 1954, Guatemala enjoys not even the semblance of economic or social reform. President Romeo Lucas Garcia has systematically and sadistically assassinated virtually every potential opposition spokesman or union leader in sight, including Christian Democrats. His likely replacement, to be elected in 1982, is sure to be either Mario Sandoval, a self-proclaimed fascist, or Arana Osorio, a former president who is notorious for fixing elections and for his cruelty.

Haig is in a bind here. So far, he has delayed producing on promised military aid. For if the U.S. openly supports Guatemala's reigning right, it will signal the Salvadoran generals that U.S.-imposed land reform was mere window-dressing. They can then turn back the clock. Well, not quite. As Lionel Gomez, the former chief advisor to the assassinated head of the land reform agency tells it in the summer issue of *Foreign Policy*, the generals have seized control of most of the nationalized banks and export market. Reform has made them the new oligarchs, free of their former masters.

As for Duarte himself, he's more than ever the generals' window-dressing. At least for foreign consumption, he lends legitimacy. Despite Duarte's denials before the U.S. Senate recently, church sources report that the reign of official terror continues unabated; Duarte and his Christian Democratic survivors in the regime have been unable to stop it. Indeed, according to Lionel Gomez again, Duarte now possesses less authority among his military allies than the opposition Democratic Front possesses with the guerrillas—so that when the Front comes out, as it did last May, for a negotiated settlement there's actually more chance of believing them than that Duarte speaks for the junta when he says that they too are now willing to negotiate.

It would seem, though, that both sides, not to mention the war-weary populace caught in between, are coming round to the idea of negotiation. For the generals haven't had it all their way. The guerrilla campaign of economic sabotage, striking at power plants, railroads, communications, and transportation, is taking a severe toll on an economy already badly damaged. Should this continue, there will be no winners.

So what's stopping negotiation? Seemingly, Washington's veto. To prove a debater's point, U.S. cowboys so far insist on "going all the way." And that's something to please those running things in Guatemala—and Chile, and Bolivia, and Argentina. Indeed, it ought to please those sitting in the Kremlin.

Solidarity Day

LABOR ON THE MARCH

A HUNGRY GIANT

A FEW YEARS AGO Irving Howe was defending the labor movement at a meeting that included some of its more impatient critics. "The labor movement is a sleeping giant," he told them, "but it's a giant. And we need a giant." The good news today is that the giant is awake.

Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO, gambled some months ago when he threw his weight behind a break with the more cautious ways of George Meany and decided to risk the prestige of labor on an all-out effort to rally the troops and their allies in Washington, DC., for a Day of Solidarity and Protest.

The gamble paid off, handsomely. Crowd estimates varied from a minimum of 240,000 to upward of 500,000. Looking down from the hill at the base of the Washington Monument as the union delegations lined up for the march up Constitution Avenue, one could see little but a great mass of humanity dotted with flags, balloons and banners blowing in the wind. It stretched all the way to the White House grounds, where a white canopy, presumably set up for some cocktail party or reception for the rich and powerful, reminded the marchers of who and what was in charge of the country.

The effort took planning, hard work, and money. Some 4,200 buses converged on the city plus chartered trains and thousands of cars. Our bus, courtesy of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), drove all night from Boston and others from as far away as Michigan and Iowa. Many unionists on the west coast flew Canadian air lines to Toronto (to avoid crossing the controllers' picket line) and bussed the rest of the way to Washington.

The rally before the Capitol threatened for a time to be an anti-climax to the march. There was no Martin Luther King to take the people to the mountain top and share his dream of a new Promised Land. There was no Walter Reuther to thrill the workers with his crisp, ringing appeals for a new America where justice and intelligence might dwell together in peace. Lane Kirkland proved to be a strong speaker, but his falling inflections stirred no enthusiasm, lit no bonfires. His best line was: "We have come too far, struggled too long, sacrificed too much, and have too much left to do, to allow all that we have achieved for the good of all to be swept away without a fight."

Tom Donahue, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, did a fine job as master of ceremonies, but the decision not to invite any politicians—a wise decision on balance—deprived the rally of practiced crowd-pleasers like Kennedy or Mondale. What saved the day was the black preachers and the widow of the greatest of them all, Coretta Scott King. Individually they could not measure up to him, but collectively they did the job that needed to be done: reaching down to the viscera, moving the heart, and breathing life into the spirit.

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They included Joseph Lowery and Jesse Jackson and, best of the lot, Benjamin Hooks, the man who has succeeded Roy Wilkins as head of the NAACP. Even the urbane attorney Vernon Jordan, retiring president of the Urban League, was rolling out Biblical phrases and lamentations that "There is no balm in Gilead." One of the more striking and significant features of the day was, in fact, the great number of black marchers (perhaps one quarter of the total) and the number and quality of the black speakers. It signaled a conscious decision on the part of the national AFL-CIO to bind itself firmly to the black community, a decision that will, I believe, pay off in greater strength and effectiveness for both, not to mention greater palpitations for Reagan and the Republicans.

Despite the absence of Democratic politicians, Solidarity Day spelled nothing but good news for the Democrats. You might say it was the opening salvo in the campaign to regain control of Congress for the liberal Democrats in 1982. My guess is that the effort will be more successful than most forecasters now predict.

One disappointment was the relatively small representation of the religious community. The National Council of Churches had a banner flying, as did the Catholic Network, the Labor Guild of Boston, and a few others, but the marchers were few. The black preachers gave authentic voice to the spirit of religion. The mind of religion was perhaps best represented by the official invocator, Monsignor George Higgins, spokesman emeritus for the U.S. Catholic Conference on questions affecting labor and social action.

He said, "There is a time and a place to sing the praises of America the Beautiful. This is not that time or place. We have gathered here to strike a different and more somber chord, to acknowledge in all honesty and with deep regret that ours is not yet one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. We are still a divided nation. Millions of our fellow citizens have been left to fend for themselves in the struggle for survival. We have come here this afternoon to show our solidarity with them and peacefully but firmly to petition the government on their behalf."

It is doubtful that the present government will listen to this petition. One aide to Reagan gave notice beforehand. "What do they want to prove?" he asked. "We know there are people who don't like us."

I am sure they knew. I am sure they knew that those people include a giant. But did they know that the giant is awake, fully dressed, and hungry? And that the breakfast it wants is the hide of Ronald Reagan and his congressional supporters.?

JOHN C CORT

(John C. Cort worked for many years in the labor movement. He is the editor of Religious Socialism, *a quarterly newsletter.)*

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

THE WAY OUT IS FORWARD

ACHIEVING A WORKING CLIMATE OF TRUST

WHEN HERODOTUS visited Egypt in the fifth century B.C. he found a decadent society, exhausted by time and the troubles of history, going through ancient motions by rote. Things were done as they had always been done, but woodenly, with frequent shortcuts. The origins of things had been forgotten, and even their meaning was dim. Formal learning was confined to a priestly class which guarded it jealously — so jealously, in fact, that the guardians themselves had lost their command of the ancient sciences. The great achievements of early Egyptian mathematicians — geometry, an estimate of the Great Year deduced from the procession of the equinoxes, even rudimentary forms of algebra — had so decayed they had to be reinvented or discovered by later thinkers, the Greeks among them. Or so I have read. Perhaps it isn't really true. Perhaps men can't forget things once they have been truly learned.

Like the Egyptians, the Americans have made an attempt to guard certain forms of scientific knowledge. When Howard Morland attempted to publish the "secret" of the H-bomb in *The Progressive* two years ago the government went to court to stop him. Morland did not know the full "secret." He had managed to figure out only a version of it, a notion of it, a suggestion of it. Morland had never worked for the government, had never signed a secrecy oath, was not even a scientist. The government argued that none of that mattered. Under the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 not just privileged knowledge, but the ideas themselves, the very principles of nature involved in bomb technology were "born secret."

This was a very broad claim. In the event it could not be maintained. Another bomb buff who had figured out elements of the "secret" published his own version while Morland was still under injunction and the government dropped its case. But in a truer sense the battle had been lost years before. The principles of nuclear physics had become the common possession of mankind. The Russians, the British, the French, and the Chinese had all figured out how to make thermonuclear weapons on their own. According to a Los Alamos scientist I talked to last spring, Carson Mark, it is a small jump from fission weapons to fusion weapons, and the main barrier to the building of fission weapons is industrial, not scientific. Bomb design is easy; the production of fissionable material is an immense undertaking. Despite the government's claims, Morland did not reveal the "secret"; he only demonstrated that it was already widely known.

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This fact tells us something important. We cannot go back. We cannot forget how to make nuclear weapons. We must live with the knowledge from now on. It took me a long time to grasp this principle, and I suspect others find a similar difficulty. We speak of "getting rid" of the bomb as if they might all be disassembled, the fissionable material buried in a salt dome, production facilities at Rocky Flats and Pantex turned into bird preserves, the technicians all sent out to teach or design toasters, the planes and missiles re-armed with conventional weapons, and the world returned to the *status quo* ante—say, 1939. This would be unusual, but not unprecedented. Japan, for two centuries, gave up gunpowder and returned to the Samurai sword. Why can't we—leaving aside for the moment the reluctance to do so of the White House, the Congress and the Pentagon—give up the bomb?

In theory, at least, this is something we might do, and it is certainly something we ought to do. But it is important to understand what such an act of renunciation would achieve, and what it would not. At the moment the United States and the Soviet Union have about fifteen thousand strategic nuclear warheads pointed at each other, at least a third of which could be delivered in thirty minutes by missile. The rest could all be fired on the opening day of a war. The result, of course, would be catastrophic; we need not dwell on that. If we got rid of all those warheads, and the others in Europe as well, we would free ourselves of two things—the knowledge, which has been sinking into the human mind since 1945 like a stone into the sea, that any day might be our last; and the danger, in the event of war, that the firing of nuclear weapons might rapidly escalate in a panicky spasm of fear that it was now or never.

Clearly, international agreements which might free of us of these two things would be a mighty achievement. There is no reason whatever to expect we shall get them, but they would be a marked improvement over the present situation, when the talk in Washington is all of more and better. But such agreements could not really free us of the threat of nuclear war. When the Manhattan Project got under way in August, 1942, the men who ran it had no clear idea how a bomb might be designed, and had never been able to manufacture even a gram of fissionable material. Kilograms were required. Nevertheless, the first bomb was detonated in July, 1945, just three years later. Soon we could produce roughly a bomb a week. If Germany had held out another six months it might have been obliterated.How long would it take to build nuclear weapons now, starting from scratch? A few weeks? It is the knowledge which takes time to acquire, not the building of hardware. We know how to build bombs. We shall *always* know. We cannot go back.

The military offers another solution to the problem posed by nuclear weapons—standing still. Not quite still, of course; we must go on developing new warheads and delivery systems as technology allows. But so long as we are dangerously armed, and cannot be disarmed, and potential enemies know it, then war is extremely unlikely. This is the theory of deterrence. It explains why we can dare to have weapons we can't dare to use. In Washington the primary source of anxiety, which always runs high, is that the threat posed by our nuclear arms will come undone—that a defense might be found (generally considered to be remote), or that the other side will develop a capacity to disarm us in a surprise attack (generally thought to be around the corner). Of fear of war itself—the resort to arms as the outcome of a political crisis which cannot be resolved diplomatically—I have never found the least trace.

"Apparently the Americans have perfected this weapon that realizes people's worst fears while leaving their apathy intact."

A couple of weeks ago I met an Air Force officer whose current assignment is tactical intelligence, which he does not like. He'd rather fly. This wasn't an interview, but a chance meeting. I'd known him in California in 1957 when he was ten or twelve. But we got to talking about defense policy and the Soviet threat and where Reagan would finally decide to put the MX and I took the opportunity to ask him the question I try to ask everybody I run across in the defense community: how is it all going to turn out? We're thirty-five years into the age of nuclear weapons, more and better all the time, no sign of Soviet-American amity, what will happen?

"Nothing will happen," he said.

Nothing?

Nothing. We will just go on as we are, matching developments in the technology of weapons delivery, indefinitely. This is an all but universal view in Washington. Military officers, civilian think-tank strategists, National Security Council staffers, even arms negotiators all share it. Nothing will happen. We won't get rid of nuclear weapons, we won't settle our differences, we won't go to war. We will just go on as we are.

There are two difficulties with the theory of deterrence and the permanent stand-off. One is the rule that in history nothing never happens. We have had no big war since 1945 but the arms race has been far from stable. A great deal has happened. Weapons have grown steadily more accurate and versatile. The Buck Rogers pushbutton warfare feared in 1945 is approaching reality and the Reagan administration's renewed emphasis on command, control, communications, and intelligence (in effect, the wiring) will make centrally-controlled nuclear warfare a genuine possibility. New technology—in the use of laser and charged-particle beams, in anti-

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submarine warfare, in depressed trajectory missiles—threatens the safety of weapons on which deterrence depends. The very scale and capacity of weaponry has become a source of tension and conflict.

The second difficulty with deterrence theory is that it depends on a notion of war as a rational act of aggrandizement, something which can be prevented by fear of the consequences. This explains some wars—World War II, perhaps—but not others, and certainly not the First World War, which was also preceded by a long period of arms innovation, military buildup, international rivalry, and recurrent crises. When hostilities began in 1914 it was for largely technical military reasons having to do with the scale and rapidity of mobilization. There are many ways hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union might begin, but very few ways they might end without recourse to nuclear weapons. In both Washington and Moscow, in fact, it is assumed that war means nuclear war, if not on the opening day, then shortly thereafter. Fear of the consequences—the existence of a deterrent—may ensure we won't embark on war deliberately, for gain, but it cannot guarantee war won't happen to us. For these reasons it seems to me that deterrence is only a stopgap, not a solution. We can't stand still.

The only way out is forward. By this I mean we have got to find some way of freeing ourselves from the danger of war itself, the one thing which is generally accepted as being impossible. Perhaps it is. But we have not got much choice. Nuclear weapons have brought something new into the world—a threat posed by arms so vast it undermines the last claims of war as a rational means of defense. This requires some new arrangement of the affairs of nations—a statement deliberately vague because I can't quite see what it is to be. Attempts to write a global constitution do not seem to get very far, and all seem to require a kind of policing force which sounds very much like an army. Fear of other people's armies is what defines the situation as it is right now. What we need is not a new army, but some way to be independent, to be different, even to be hostile, without recourse to arms.

The only route forward I can see is through arms negotiations, but negotiations with a somewhat different emphasis. Limiting the numbers of weapons, or the development of new ones, is useful and helpful. It reduces the amount of hardware which might be available in the opening stage of a war. But even more importantly, agreement—on arms or any other substantial matter of mutual interest—establishes a working climate of trust and cooperation. Negotiating focuses the attention of national leaders on what arms can do, since no ruler would surrender his authority to decide such matters. It allows nations to decide security questions on an ad hoc basis, one at a time, in the light of the moment. It reminds military men that peace is their goal, or at least requires them to say so in public. It encourages people to think security depends on agreements, not on threats of violence. It channels debate toward the language of justice, equity, and fairness. It tends to narrow differences, since even failures to agree generally do not fail by much. But perhaps most important of all, it provides hope of a way out. The hope may be farfetched or illusory, but it's better than dreaming of simpler times, or standing still waiting for nothing to happen forever.

THOMAS POWERS

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE POWER DISEASE

WHAT THE MEDIA MOODMAKERS FORGET

THERE IS a lot of talk now, with the Reagan administration's ascendancy, about America's new spirit. Reagan is a charmer and a lot of the people around him are zealous and full of the belief that with this election America has turned a corner: now, at last, good things will begin to happen. Liberal and conservative critics have interpreted this mood according to their own ideological preferences, liberals generally agreeing that tried and true liberal programs were not working very well, but arguing that Reagan's version of the good society won't work any better and will in fact cause more pain. Conservatives are still glowing with their good fortune, except for the extremists who see in every compromise a betrayal of the faith. The glow is beginning to fade a little, as interest rates stay high and as it becomes clear that you can't spend as much on defense as Reagan wants to without keeping inflation as high as it is now; and it was funny to hear a pro-Reagan senator refer to the people on Wall Street as "nervous nellies" the other day. That term used to be applied to people who opposed the war in Vietnam, not to capitalists who aren't willing to put all their faith in supply-side economics. Despite the tarnish, a lot of people are still excited. Evans and Novak, in a new book, are calling this a real *revolution*.

Maybe we should look less at the conservative or liberal principles which are being advanced or impeded, and more at the phenomenon of mood in politics.

This will seem like blasphemy to people who revere the Kennedy legend (I met one just the other day, who said she just couldn't believe what they said about Jack and all those women), but the mood in Washington now is very much like the mood that gave us miles of print about Camelot and the New Frontier, and the belief that those best and brightest people could solve all of the problems. With Kennedy and Reagan both, a lot of people believed that at last something fresh and exciting was happening in America. The press bought the mood — the press buys into the prevailing moods it helps to create the way sickly children catch colds — and enjoyed wallowing in such trivia as J.F.K.'s reading habits (he liked James Bond, which should have told them something), Reagan's wood-

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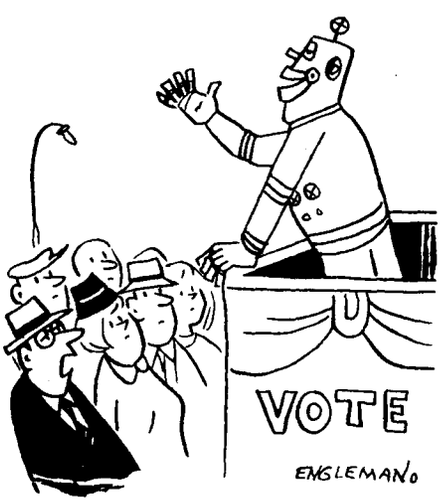
chopping, Pablo Casals at the White House, Adam Smith neckties, all of these things are seen as signs of the "new spirit." The overall tone is that at last someone might be able to make the world work right. The mood passes eventually, but in the meantime we have months of fascinated indulgence. It is an indulgence of the lazy press, which doesn't have to work very hard when it can make easy generalizations about how different and new everything is, and it is an indulgence of the nation's leaders, who are given much more than a "honeymoon." They are presented as really new, really fresh, full of messianic promise.

It is the nature of the press to exaggerate, to play up any possible drama. The countdown given the American hostages in Iran is a good example. News broadcasts ended by telling us it was "day 200," etc., of America held hostage. That sort of thing helped to give a strong impression of American humiliation. My point isn't to argue that the taking of the hostages was in any way a justifiable thing, but only to contrast it with the capture of the *Pueblo*. Americans were tortured then, during an eleven-month captivity which ended when America apologized—an apology which was not seen as a loss of face, because everyone saw it for what it was: the way to get Americans released from captivity. The major difference between the two cases is the way they were handled by the media. In the case of Iran, this had profound political consequences. It led to Carter's defeat, and to the hawkishness of the Reagan administration's first moves. There is a connection between the taking of hostages in Iran and the downing of the Libyan jets, and it has a lot to do with a mood which the press helps to create, and then to feed from.

There is danger in the current talk about a new spirit in America, because people like Reagan and Kennedy and any other leader tend to interpret the faintest glimmer of approval as a solid mandate to act. What we get as a result of their gusts of self-confidence is Vietnam, or the Bay of Pigs, or monstrous increases in research for nuclear weapons.

My bias should be clear: I think that people like J.F.K., Reagan, Brezhnev, and Castro are more like one another than they are like normal human beings. People who seek power over other people are sick to some degree, and people who seek the sort of power which the state confers are probably very sick. There are, no doubt, a few exceptions. Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Lech Walesa aren't ordinary politicians. Their form of leadership has its own set of problems, and they aren't necessarily innocent problems. They are like the problems we encounter in a Khomeini or a Jim Jones. Charismatic leadership, with its built-in sense that this particular leader is absolutely necessary, can be abused as easily as any other kind—more easily, in fact, since the person who believes that God has chosen him to lead others will stop at nothing.

The only good thing to be said for monarchy is that a person finds himself *having* to take power; he doesn't have to offer the world a justification for the fact. He is king the way others are black, white, or oriental. However, the sick desire for power is so prevalent that even monarchies find themselves beset by usurpers, the monarchical equivalent of presidential candidates. Our political system could be seen as a social service, providing a channel for a form of madness, something like the way primitive cultures make shamans of people who in our society would simply be diagnosed as schizophrenic. The problem with the desire for power is that it can only be satisfied when it is not confined to ritual situations, as shamanism is; it must manipulate others to be satisfying at all. The world must be made over into the image of the one who serves power. And people who believe that someone must finally take charge of their lives and save them from emptiness are natural victims. As long as our political thinking moves from mood to mood, and deeper questions about power and manipulation are not addressed, we are in danger. There is something wrong with a press which is revolted by Jonestown, but finds Henry Kissinger healthy, even exciting.



"Looks like a machine politician to me!"

There is a book called *Nuclear Witnesses: Insiders Speak Out* (W.W. Norton, $16.95). In it people who have worked with nuclear materials present their thoughts about the influence of nuclear technology in our world. One of them is medical physicist John W. Gofman, who has this to say: "Even if you made an agreement to abolish all nuclear weapons, but you left an established power structure in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., they'd go on to research mind control or some chemical or biological thing. My view is, there exists a group of people in the world that have . . . the 'power disease'. They want to rule and control other people. They are a more important plague than cancer, pneumonia, bubonic plague, tuberculosis, and heart disease put together. They can only think how to obliterate, control, and use each other. They use people as nothing more than instruments to be cast aside when they don't need them anymore . . . In my opinion, what we need now is to move toward being nauseated by people who want to be at the top, in power . . . Can you think of anything more ridiculous than that the Chinese, Russian, and American people let their governments play with superlethal toys and subject all of us to these hazards? The solution is not to replace one leader with another or to have more government. Society has to reorganize itself."

The obvious question is, of course, how? But Dr. Gofman is right to say that it is power—not who has it, but power itself—which is at the center of the problem.

JOHN GARVEY

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MECHANIC OF THE NEW RIGHT—WITH NO APOLOGIES

The right to fight

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

FOR ONE VIEW of what happened in 1980 and what it means for elections to come, you go to talk with Paul Weyrich. Weyrich heads up the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress (CSFC) and has lines into almost everything that operates under the banner of the New Right. He is sometimes called the hard center of the hard core of the hard right.

"Paul Weyrich is a wonderful man," Jerry Falwell has said, "but you have to realize he's pretty far out. He's the Ralph Nader or William Sloane Coffin of our side." Remarks such as Falwell's might hurt Weyrich's ego just a little, but Weyrich knows that leaders who need to broaden their base do not want to be too closely identified with persons who tend to polarize. And while Weyrich is not indifferent to the need to broaden bases, he wants it understood that his strong suit is sharpening the issues. It was Weyrich who, on a network television show the very night of the 1980 election, put George Bush on notice that, if he didn't toe the conservative line, he would be washed up by 1984. Some of Weyrich's allies say they cringed at that. But one suspects that on this and many other occasions those who claim to cringe are delighted that Paul Weyrich says out loud what they only think or whisper in their closets.

Weyrich is 39-years-old and the father of five children. He is from Racine, Wisconsin; his family background is definitely immigrant, blue-collar, Republican, and Catholic; and he defiantly wears each of those items as though it were a medal. There is a belligerency about Paul Weyrich, as though he were over-compensating for not being from the right place or the right class or the right schools. There is nothing chic or svelte about him, and he wants it understood that he has little use for everything that he is not.

He is short and endomorphic—well, chubby, laden with baby fat and keenly alert to enemies on every side. There is none of the bonhomie, whether real or pretended, that surrounds a Richard Viguerie or a Falwell. We are meeting at the CSFC headquarters in an obscure little lane called Library Court, behind the Library of Congress. The taxi driver had never heard of it, but in some political circles Library Court is legendary. For the last five years or more it has, under the auspices of Paul Weyrich, been the meeting place for the high councils of the New Right. Here, if the stories of the New Right are to be credited, have been hatched the schemes that have revolutionized American politics. The day of our meeting, Weyrich is surrounded by packing boxes stuffed with files. He and his operations are moving into more spacious quarters at a "better" address in Washington. Perhaps the moving contributes to his nervousness.

"This alliance between religion and politics didn't just happen, although you might get that impression from the surprise that the liberal media have been showing," says Weyrich. "I've been dreaming and working on this for years." Weyrich does not dissent from the suggestion that he was the person critical to the recruitment of Jerry Falwell to the New Right. But just as Falwell distances himself from Weyrich, so Weyrich seems nervous about an independent streak in Falwell. Falwell's base is so large, and so largely removed from the control of the circle over which Weyrich would preside.

WEYRICH MAKES CLEAR that he does not suffer gladly deviants from his hard line. "Some of our own people are making the big mistake of thinking the essential job was done in 1980. We've taken an important step in the right direction but the victory is far from being complete or secure. We could still lose.

"Of course we were happy when Reagan was elected, but that just gets us started on the job that needs to be done. Reagan is not the answer, he is not a man of strong character. He is a compromiser and a ratifier of other people's decisions. Our fight is not for Reagan or for the Republicans, we fight on principle, not on person or party. Maybe Reagan will still

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surprise us but I am convinced he's not the kind of leader who would go down with the ship."

Reagan is tainted by association with the establishment. It is left unclear how a president could govern except through association with the power structures. But Weyrich shares with other New Right leaders the odd posture of being a power broker by virtue of being an outsider. In any case, establishment is a very dirty word in Weyrich's lexicon. It is almost always combined, especially when speaking of Republicans and the "Old Right," with the modifier "Northeastern." Thus northeasternestablishment, like damnyankee, becomes one word. William Buckley is definitely of the northeasternestablishment. Weyrich recalls a Washington meeting with Buckley and other conservatives in 1971 when he was just a kid excited to be on the fringe of the conservative big time. "They were talking about a move in Congress and I asked, 'Where's your head count?' They looked at me like I'd just done something vulgar in public, as if I were a heretic. That's when I decided they're just not real."

It is not simply that the Old Right is disdainful of political plumbing. Weyrich resents more deeply that they are disdainful of plumbers, political and otherwise. "The Old Right is as elitist as the liberal intellectuals. I'm not an intellectual, but they don't know a thing about precincts and neighborhoods, and they don't want to know." This line takes Weyrich back to the question of class, of the right schools, and of the aristocratic networks so far removed from Racine, Wisconsin. "My father was a blue-collar worker and he didn't have much education but he was smart, the smartest man I've ever known, a lot smarter than these people. He knew how the world worked and I'm like him, I'm a political mechanic and I make no apology for it. We're the kind of people who get things done."

How about the "neoconservatives," people like Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz, the crowd around *Commentary* and *Public Interest*? They too are part of the northeastern-establishment, but here the criticism is more subdued. "I don't know how much real difference they make, but they helped to make our ideas respectable in the Northeast, even with some liberals." Despite the flaunting of his non-U background and viewpoint, despite his harsh words for intellectuals, Weyrich certainly does not wish to imply that he is an illiterate incapable of understanding anything other than computer feedouts on opinion polls and voting returns. He indicates a grudging respect for the neoconservatives. Unlike the "bright boys" of the Old Right, they have not treated him condescendingly and perhaps they have even helped the cause.

But ideas cannot be permitted to get in the way of the cause. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan is mentioned. Is he among the neoconservative thinkers for whom Weyrich has a grudging respect? "Moynihan is smart and his rhetoric is very good sometimes. But his votes are terrible, really terrible." Doesn't Moynihan get some credit for his long-standing support of tuition tax credits and other helps for voluntary education? "We don't need Moynihan for that. If Reagan keeps his promises, Moynihan will be irrelevant, he'll be just one more vote in the Senate for tuition tax credits." Moynihan is on the "hit list" of several New Right groups; however much he has helped to move the northeasternestablishment in a conservative direction, Paul Weyrich obviously relishes the prospect of an ex-Senator Moynihan.

"So, if Ronald Reagan keeps his promises, war might be more likely. . . . That's not a very pleasant prospect, but you can't always be giving in to threats."

WEYRICH SUBSCRIBES to the axiom often attributed to John F. Kennedy, "Don't get mad, get even." But Weyrich also gets mad. He is visibly upset when the discussion turns to conservatism and compassion. Why do the moral majoritarians and their New Right allies come across as the moral meanies? "Sure, people say we're not compassionate. But who are all these people who are supposed to be so compassionate? Then look at our background. We're not the products of third-generation wealth.

"Of course I care about the people who are treated unfairly. In that sense I feel a lot closer to William Jennings Bryan than to the Tories of whatever stripe. . . . The liberals talk about compassion for minorities, but their compassion is really condescending, it's patronizing. And blacks are starting to catch on to that." Weyrich has strong hopes for the "movability" of the black vote. "We're beginning to see the change and it can change a lot more. In '76 we got five percent of the black vote while in '80 it was fourteen percent, that's a three hundred percent increase." The "we" in question is the Republican candidate.

Returning to the subject of compassion an agitated Weyrich describes the outrageous slanders directed his way. "People in my own church [he mentions prominent names] and even some bishops have said I'm insincere on abortion, that I really don't care about the unborn, I just want to exploit the issue politically. Those are vicious lies by people who don't know me, who've never even talked with me. I've been pro-life long before it became a big issue. I care about the weak more than some of them do. Everything we're doing is trying to help people who the liberals and their policies have been stepping on. But of course they won't give me any credit for being sincere. They're the only sincere ones, they're the only ones who care!"

Weyrich does not always make it easy to recognize the tenderness of his moral sensibilities. With an almost touching urgency he presents himself as being tough. Yet like other New Right leaders, Weyrich admits the cause is handicapped by its failure to communicate caring and compassion. "It's not

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enough," he says, "to be against the present social programs. We have to find new ways of caring. In almost every case you could mention, private care is what government policy should support. If it's private, it's better for the people involved, it's more economical, and it gets government out of doing what it can't do well, even if it had the mandate to be doing it, which it doesn't." He likes the "mediating structures" proposal that has gained some currency in recent years—that public policy should enable families, churches, voluntary associations, and neighborhoods to make the decisions and deliver the services where they best understand the needs. But he has not thought about it very much. Again he sounds the New Right refrain that they have been fighting so long just to get into the game that they haven't had the luxury of time to think up positive alternatives to the programs they oppose.

WHAT SHOULD BE U.S. policy on world hunger and economic development? He looks surprised by the question and makes some perfunctory exploratory responses along the lines of transferring agricultural technology and ending patterns of dependency (the last is a safe response on any subject that smacks of welfare). Then, for the first time, a self-deprecatory near-smile as he admits the obvious, "You know I haven't given that much thought." The mechanic quickly comes to the rescue: "Maybe we should have a task force on that. Yes, that's definite, we should. I've set up task forces on a number of questions where our people have been kind of weak in the past." He mentions a professor at Chicago who has "sound" views on global poverty. Maybe he would help out.

How about using people connected with existing organizations dealing with world economic development? Weyrich insists he is ecumenical but he is not sure he wants to be that ecumenical. "The problem here is that for so long the liberals have claimed important issues as their own, and we often made the mistake of believing them. So they end up using all the expertise for their own ideological purposes. We have to develop our own experts." Then, lest one infer that the New Right has been fulminating on issues it does not understand, he adds, "You know there are a lot of experts out there on the so-called liberal issues who are really on our side. They just haven't had a political power base on which to operate. That's part of my job, to bring them together and plug them in to where the decisions are made."

On some questions Weyrich is not so modest about not having the answers. His answers do not help much, however, in the caring and compassion department. On nuclear war, for example, he is assertive: "Of course there may be a greater chance of nuclear war with real conservatives in power. Carter was right, you know—you could almost certainly count on him to prevent nuclear war. Why should the Russians go to war when Carter and the other liberals are ready to give them what they want without war. If preventing war is your highest goal, it's not hard to achieve. You just make concessions. But if we rearm to the point where the Soviet Union might see itself becoming a second-rate power again, then they might make a preemptive strike to prevent that. So, if Ronald Reagan keeps his promises, war might be more likely. I'd say there's a fifty percent chance of the Communists going to war rather than becoming a second-rate power. That's not a very pleasant prospect, but you can't always be giving in to threats. It's like having a bully in your neighborhood who won't let you go out of your house. You can avoid conflict and stay in the house or you can be a man and go out and take your chances." The tone is very personal. The global neighborhood is put on notice that Paul Weyrich is not going to be pushed around any more.

IN DISCUSSING the Religious New Right, its impact on the 1980 elections and its future, Weyrich refers simply to the "church network." He is bullish on the future of the "church network," giving the impression that it is a rapidly expanding subsidiary of the New Right conglomerate. He says the hard core constituency of the New Right numbers about four-and-a-half million, but the "church network" is over and above that number. In agreement with Falwell and others, Weyrich describes the "church network" as being largely made up of people who had never been politically active. As often as not they were not even registered to vote. They are the people who had long suspected that the country was going to hell in a handbasket but, until now, didn't think there was much they could do about it. An important difference between the "church network" and the rest of the New Right, according to Weyrich, is that "the church people are often uneducated when it comes to the economic issues." "They are motivated by the social issues, like abortion and prayer in the schools, and also by defense issues. They're passionately anti-Communist. That's all right with us. On both scores the liberals are fifteen years behind in their perception of reality. The liberals hate the social issues. We love them. And the liberal intellectuals have a hard time being as smart as the ordinary American who has long since seen Communism for what it is."

Further growth depends upon the Religious New Right being able to expand beyond its fundamentalist base. "Catholics in this country do not differ with the views of Moral Majority on most issues," says Weyrich. The problem is reaching Catholics with the message and Weyrich thinks Senator Jeremiah Denton of Alabama, a strong Catholic and military hero, might be just the person to do that. "Of course he or anyone else who tries to do that will have to compete with the hierarchy. The bishops are part of the old liberal elite. On the other hand, they're so trendy that maybe they'll read the signs of the times and switch sides. I don't know if they'll do that. Most of them are probably too locked in to their positions. But those who don't begin to come over are in for hard days. A big factor here is that the liberal hierarchy clearly disagrees with the pope. Pope John Paul is on our side and the people are on our side, so the American bishops will increasingly discover that the vise is tightening both from the top and the bottom."

Jerry Falwell calls John Paul, "the best hope we Baptists ever had." Weyrich—an Eastern rite Catholic—has also done

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"I would never be working counter to the church's position. It's the American bishops who are doing that."

some creative interpretation of John Paul's positions in order to turn him into a New Rightist. It is important that he believe this interpretation. "If we didn't know the pope agrees with us, we, at least we Catholics in the New Right, would have serious conscience problems. I would never be working counter to the church's official position. It's the American bishops who are doing that. The fact is that they're hypocrites, pretending to speak for the Catholic church when all the time they're undercutting the teaching of the pope."

The expansion of the "church network" is not limited to Roman Catholics. Weyrich looks hopefully to the conservative leadership in, for example, Missouri Synod Lutheranism. He believes there is also a natural convergence of interests with groups such as the "Good News" movement in Methodism and expressions of similar discontents among Presbyterians and other Protestant "mainliners."

BUT HOW MUCH real impact did the church network have on the 1980 election and how important will it be in 1982 and 1984? On these questions Weyrich takes a somewhat different line from that of the preachers on the right. True, in the flush of the November, 1980, victory Falwell boasted publicly that ninety percent of the candidates favored by Moral Majority had won. But such public flaunting of political muscle is atypical, for the preachers know that much of the public still thinks it unseemly for clergy to be too overtly involved in the compromising political tasks of promoting and defeating candidates. More typical is the statement of James Robison of the Roundtable, "It would be vanity for any group to try to claim they were responsible for what happened." That is the approach customarily taken also by Falwell who uses every occasion to repeat that Moral Majority does not endorse candidates. it only "educates" the people to the issues and then trusts them to be smart enough to draw the proper inference when they get to the polling booth.

Paul Weyrich does not need to be so disingenuous. He exults in his role as a political mechanic of interest group conflict. At the same time, Weyrich has to maintain his credibility as a political analyst by not overstating the strength of his forces. Once again, there is the tension of portraying your side as an unstoppable juggernaut while simultaneously telling your people that they are beset on all sides. Today, however, Weyrich is prepared to sin on the side of overconfidence.

In listening to Weyrich's analysis of the impact of the "church network" several distinctions should be kept in mind. The New Right is the hyped-up version of the Old Right, departing, however, from the attachment of at least some older conservatives to consensus and civility. In practice if not in theory, the New Right tends to favor direct democracy over the gentility of republican governance. The Religious New Right is the New Right moving into an expansive constituency that identifies its concerns primarily in religious terms. By providing the language and passions of a religious reading of the cosmic drama the leaders of the Religious New Right lend potency to the apocalypticism of the New Right. Another factor in all this, the right-to-life or pro-life constituency, is more complex. Many pro-lifers are adamant that theirs is not a conservative but a liberal cause, their goal being not to restrict but to expand the definition of the human community that is to be afforded societal protection by including the unborn in that definition. Nonetheless, New Right leaders see the pro-life movement as a plus for them. Even pro-life activists who reject the agenda of the Right in all its forms are often prepared to make at least a tacit alliance on the issue of abortion. When Weyrich speaks of the "church network," then, he means the New Right as it has expanded into the Religious New Right and is reinforced at points by pro-life activism.

"The bedrock of political effectiveness is making coalitions," says Weyrich. "The church network is really a coalition and I believe that coalition was the critical factor in most Southern states in 1980." He mentions Texas, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Alabama. "And don't forget that Denton [Alabama] and Don Nickles [Oklahoma] are both Catholics. The two senate races most clearly decided by the church network elected Catholics in overwhelmingly Protestant areas. That's very important for the future " According to Weyrich, the "church network" was also important though not the decisive factor in places such as Iowa, South Dakota, and Indiana.

Still, who actually did the defeating and electing remains in doubt. The evidence suggests that if all the other variables are isolated the one faction that can convincingly claim the strongest victory record in 1980 is the pro-life movement. Where a New Right attack was not allied with the right-to-life forces, as in the case of the attack on Senator Thomas Eagleton of Missouri, the attack failed.

THE INTERESTING RETICENCE of Weyrich and others in not claiming credit for Reagan's election is related to the New Right's ambivalence about giving the impression that their people are in power. As troubled as they are about the outsider-insider dilemma, however, the temptation to lay claim to maximum influence is hard to resist. In discussing the factors that elected Reagan, Weyrich urges that the larger process be kept in view. One must ask how Reagan got to be the Republican nominee, not simply why people voted this way or that on November 4, 1980. In speaking to a Roundtable seminar, Richard Viguerie makes a similar point. "There's

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nothing that I can think of politically that is going to get me hotter than the statement that Reagan received a broad base of support and therefore it isn't the conservatives that he's really indebted to." This line, promoted by "conservative establishment-type journalists and politicians" is, according to Viguerie, sheer rot. "Ronald Reagan did not go directly from the moviemaking business to the White House; there was a little intervening period of time between the Detroit Convention of 1980, where he was the near-unanimous choice of the Republicans, and 1965. For fifteen years it was *only* the conservative movement, the hardcore conservative movement in America, that supported Ronald Reagan. Not until he was the odds-on favorite to become the Republican nominee did the establishment get behind him."

Having taken credit for Reagan's election, Viguerie's peroration to the Roundtable returns to the outsider-insider problematic: "So, just like Jimmy Carter gave religious conservatives the back of his hand and ignored them, we see the same thing happening in the Reagan administration . . . We cannot let down. We have got to continue to man the barricades. The cavalry has not yet arrived." While making this ambivalent claim to having elected Reagan, New Right leaders typically neglect to mention that many of them supported other candidates for the nomination such as Philip Crane and John Connally (vigorously promoted by Viguerie). But the claim must still be made. First, to assure others that they are a force to be reckoned with and, second, to give the impression that they are being betrayed by somebody who should be a friend. The sense of being betrayed is essential to sustaining the New Right, and there is no betrayal more bitter than betrayal by a friend.

AS PAUL WEYRICH looks ahead to contests to come, his prognosis might be described as Upbeat Armageddon. It is a schizoid counterpoint between a call to man the barricades and to join in a victory dance. He emphasizes the role of direct mail and other techniques in making end runs around the establishment's party procedures. More than other New Right leaders, Weyrich is disdainful of the Old Right's devotion to republican governance. "Direct democracy is not just an expedient until we get into power. It's a necessary part of the political process; it's the only way to make government responsive, to make sure that people keep promises after they're elected. . . . The Republican party is not built on principles, it's a tradition maintained by effete gentlemen of the northeasternestablishment who play games with other effete gentlemen who call themselves Democrats." And, of course, both parties are in a conspiracy against the American people.

Weyrich's views on collusion among the several establishments can sound very leftist. "Big corporations are as bad as big government. They're in bed together. I don't favor free enterprise in the sense that we should bail out Chrysler or other big businesses. My convictions on this are strongly shaped by my Christian belief. Real free enterprise is more just because it takes the Christian idea of stewardship seriously and it permits the development of talents." Weyrich is not enthusiastic about Milton Friedman and other conservative monetarists. "They're libertarian in their approach and I'm not a libertarian. *Laissez-faire* is not enough, there has to be some higher value in a society. There can be no such thing as an entirely free market. The market has to be responsive to social responsibility. Here I agree even with some liberals, but we disagree on what those social responsibilities are and how you translate them into policy.

"For some of the Old Right free market theory is their gospel. As a Christian, I already have a gospel and I'm not going to exchange it for an economic theory."

On issues that he feels most strongly about, such as abortion, Weyrich thinks the fight has just been joined. He is personally open to different ways in which the abortion question might be resolved—whether by legislation short of a constitutional amendment or by returning the question to the states. "I know too that, however it's settled, we're not going to get everything we want. I have no doubt there will be exceptions in the law, for rape and incest and things like that. And liberals will try to make those exceptions so broad that they're really loopholes and we're back at abortion on demand." Then, succeeding in looking quite fierce, "But I tell the right to life people that they have to take the hard line, the pure line—tough, no exceptions at all. There will be a compromise, but it's not their role to compromise. Their role is to be absolute, one hundred percent, and in that way they'll determine the direction of the compromise."

"Determine the direction of the compromise" is what Paul Weyrich sees himself doing in the larger political arena. Toward that end, "the need for a vital active religious movement has never been more crucial, because all we have done to date is to earn the right to fight."

Is Paul Weyrich "using" religion to advance the ambitions of the New Right? Undoubtedly. Does Paul Weyrich believe that in doing so he is advancing the highest purposes of his religious faith? I have no reason to doubt that either. With so many things in need of fixing, however, a political mechanic has little time for prolonged introspection. He laces his conversation with the reminder, "I am not an intellectual." That may be diffidence, or it may be an excuse for not examining the ambiguities of his cause. What is most clear about Paul Weyrich is that, against all those who he believes despise him and his kind, this son of immigrant, blue-collar Racine, Wisconsin, is determined to exercise his right to fight.

"The Republican party is . . . a tradition maintained by effete gentlemen . . . who play games with other effete gentlemen who call themselves Democrats."

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UNCERTAIN PROSPECTS IN SPAIN

Democracy vs. fear

BENJAMIN MARTIN

IT IS GENERALLY unappreciated just how grave a threat confronts Spain's new democracy. Since the abortive military putsch of last February 23, civilian authority has weakened substantially. The government's energies are largely devoted to bolstering itself amidst continuing military discontent and unrestrainable acts of destabilization. All signs point to a fateful testing of the parliamentary regime's viability either prior to or following the elections that are to be held in early 1983. Will Spain's wobbly democratic institutions stand the strain of this electoral showdown? At this point the answer remains highly uncertain.

It is true that chances of another try at military takeover have diminished for the immediate future. But the price of this respite has been high. The center-right government has placated military hardliners by giving the generals an increased ability to influence policy-making. Proportionately, civilian authority has deteroriated, losing much of its effectiveness. A fragile balance has thus been struck since the coup attempt between supporters of constitutionalism and those who yearn for a return to Franco-style authoritarianism. Such a government offers a most inviting target for disruption from the extreme right and left.

Two recent incidents provide some indication of the extent to which civilian authority has been eroded. During May a group of armed men seized control of the Banco Central in mid-town Barcelona and held its several hundred occupants hostage. They demanded air passage from Spain for themselves and the military officers implicated in the failed coup of February 23. The attempt was foiled by timely countermeasures of special anti-terrorist commando units. But the success of their exploit was quickly squandered through fumbling and contradictory explanations by government spokesmen regarding the motivations behind the bank seizure. First it was announced that members of the Civil Guard, the national police constabulary, were among the attackers. This was then denied and Prime Minister Calvo Sotelo identified ultra-rightists as the culprits. Finally those involved in the incident were described as merely criminal elements engaged in an undertaking without political connections. As a consequence, most Spaniards are now convinced that the government has concealed the truth.

Not long thereafter three young men in the southern province of Almeria who had been detained by Civil Guards were found dead with tell-tale signs that they had been subjected to torture before being murdered. A clumsy attempt had been made to cover up the deed by contriving an auto accident. Civil Guards had apparently taken them for suspected members of the Basque ETA terrorist guerrillas and decided to take the law into their own hands.

As the details were made public, a national uproar ensued. The parliamentary opposition demanded a special inquiry into the gruesome incident. The government's response was to cover up and stonewall, shying away from any official confirmation of the known facts. Under military and police pressures, the government chose this ignominious way out, being "persuaded" that to prosecute the guilty parties would impugn the "honor" of the Civil Guard and lead to further problems with a police force that has been a fertile recruiting ground for anti-government and rightist plotters. As in similar circumstances since February 23 the opposition parties are reluctant to press this issue too vigorously for fear of further weakening the government and thus imperiling the beleaguered parliamentary structure. It is illustrative of the prevailing paralysis in the political life of the country.

The government has scored modest success on the economic front. The unions and employers have agreed to limit wage increases this year to 0-11 percent, appreciably below the current 16 percent inflationary rate. Employers and the government have pledged to stimulate investement and create 350,000 new jobs.

Unemployment in Spain has gone beyond 13.5 percent, the highest in Europe, and continues to grow at an alarming pace. The need for effective counter measures is therefore urgent. But, however laudatory, the new social contract is in fact more cosmetic than substantive. It is unlikely that the number of new jobs to be created can attain the pledged goal.

In an effort to bolster its battered image the government has decided to press for early membership in NATO and to seek an accelerated admission date to the European Economic Community. The member nations of the Common Market had for various reasons heretofore decided to delay Spanish membership until 1984 or later instead of the originally planned entry by 1983. But entry into NATO will probably take place this

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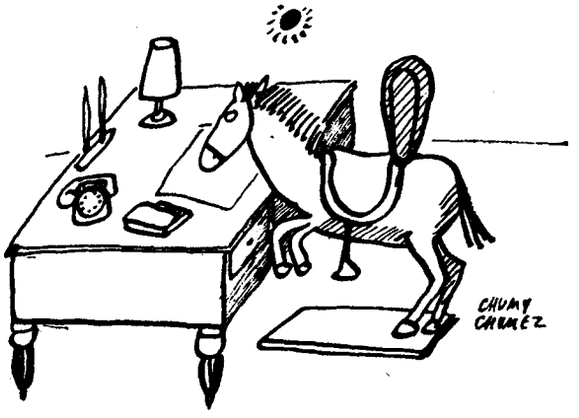
year. Yet the strategic advantages accruing from Spain's accession to the Atlantic Alliance are modest at best. It is a prospect that fills with ardor only the Spanish government and the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Most European NATO members are merely hopeful that entry may enhance the stature of Spain's democratic government and mitigate authoritarian tendencies among the Spanish military. Even so, the issue of NATO membership is domestically highly controversial. A recent poll has indicated that more Spaniards oppose NATO membership than those who favor it. For this reason the government has chosen to secure approval of NATO entry solely by means of a parliamentary vote.

Current efforts to secure NATO membership coincide with negotiations to renew the agreement with the U.S. (that terminates in this month) to permit the continued presence of four American military bases in Spain. Hoping to extract maximum political advantage and to fend off criticism from the opposition socialists the government has sought extensive financial and technical concessions from the U.S. But there is scant hope of harvesting much political capital from the new base accord. The conclusion of a new agreement promises to be difficult. For the U.S. to accede to Spain's demands would establish precedents that would complicate reaching similar accords with other client nations such as Greece, Portugal, Turkey, etc. Furthermore, the mood in Congress and the Office of Management and Budget favors a tightening up of what is perceived as the excessive largesse of the past.

Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo's cup of woes is indeed filled to the overflowing. As if grave institutional crisis, severe economic slump, simmering military discontent, and unchecked terrorism were not enough, his party, the governing Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), is also badly hobbled by bitter and divisive internal quarrels. Party conservatives are seeking control and also challenge the leadership on grounds of ideology and political strategy. It is a party gripped by ever-increasing disarray. The country has recently been treated to the sorry spectacle of some thirty UCD deputies violating party discipline and siding with the opposition to assure the adoption of the version of a new divorce law that the government opposed.

Named prime minister in February, Sotelo has in fact inherited the direction of a party over which he commands little control. Now more than ever a delicate balance must be maintained in directing the politically heterogeneous UCD. The loyalty of many key figures remains wedded to Adolfo Suarez. Under political duress and growing unpopularity the latter had relinquished both the prime ministership and party leadership last January. Suarez remained on the sidelines of party affairs for a time but with the parliamentary elections of 1983 approaching he is presently engaged in a bruising contest with Calvo Sotelo for organizational control. What makes the internal controversies so acrimonious is the currently dismal standing of UCD in voter preference polls and the soaring popularity of the socialists. Felipe Gonzalez, the General Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), is now considered the country's most highly regarded political leader. Were an election to be held soon PSOE would win by a landslide.



The socialists as a consequence find themselves in a devilish predicament. As UCD's prospects for electoral success continue to fade and those of PSOE grow more rosy, the chances for destabilizing actions to prevent holding of the election increase correspondingly. Painfully conscious of the situation the socialists first sought inclusion in a coalition government following the February coup attempt. But although it would have strengthened his government at a moment of great institutional peril, Calvo Sotelo rejected the offer. He did this because of military veto and because socialist entry would also have had a disruptive effect on his badly divided party.

As an alternative the leaders of PSOE are presently engaged in a policy of "concentration" with the government on major issues that is perceived as strengthening the parliamentary system's viability without resorting to coalition government. The strategy also adds a measure of legitimation to the socialists as the future governing party.

The crucial question, therefore, is whether constitutionally mandated elections and a possible transfer of the reins of government are going to take place in 1983. To make this happen the government must abandon its current mollycoddling of the military and police personnel who participated in the February 23 coup attempt and purge the armed forces of disloyal and subversive elements. Admittedly a very difficult task. But if it is not done the chances are quite high that the military will intervene to prevent the socialists from taking power.

There is little evidence to suggest thus far that the government is capable of summoning the necessary will and courage to do this. Moreover, the government's inept handling of the adulterated cooking-oil scandal that has already cost the lives of more than 120 and hospitalized 11,000, its expected defeat in regional elections in Galicia and Andalusia this month as well as continuing disarray within the UCD, could very well make necessary the calling of early elections sometime next year. Both the center-right government and the opposition socialists recognize that the crises of the democratic regime that began with the storming of the parliament on February 23 will be decided in a definitive manner by the success or failure to permit an orderly transfer of power. For that reason the months ahead are going to be a time of mounting ordeal for this tension-ridden country.

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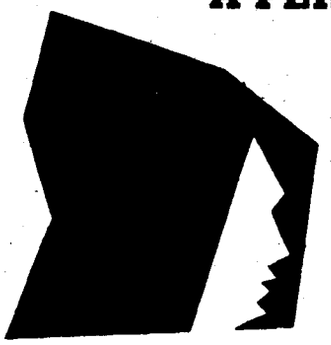

What Buddhist monks can teach us

JOHN STEVENS

MONASTICISM—life in a Buddhist monastery as a member of the sangha, observing a set of precepts and devoting oneself to meditation—is considered the noblest way of life throughout the Theravadin countries of Southeast Asia. Many, if not most, men spend at least some time as a monk; they shave their heads, don the ocher robe of renunciation, and make the begging rounds every morning. As such they resemble monks in a Catholic monastery with one important difference: they are under no compulsion to stay, and indeed are not expected to do so.

Of course, some remain in the order but the majority return to lay life, occasionally visiting the monastery for brief retreats, and many become monks again upon retirement. An Indian scholar of the eighth century was seven times a monk, seven times a layman. No comment was made when he departed from the monastery, and he was accepted back each time without a word.

Buddhist vows are important, but not absolute in the sense of being eternally binding. Within the order rules must be accepted for the sake of discipline; they are valid under certain conditions but not universally applicable. When the time comes that an ascetic can no longer follow the rules naturally with a sincere heart he or she should "move on" to something else.

Buddhists maintain that the fundamental principle of this world is change—no one is the same person at thirty years of age as he was at twenty; different stages of our lives require different practices. Sometimes monastic observance and peaceful surroundings are necessary; at other times, life in the world in the midst of its troubles and temptations is the best place to meditate. Neither should be avoided, nor should one be chosen exclusively over the other. A true monk is attached to nothing, and always acts freely whatever he may be doing.

This is the basic principle of Buddhist practice in Japan. Head temples hold one or two one-hundred-day training periods each year. During these sessions the training is the most severe imaginable—hours of meditation and other austerities, hard physical labor, daily confrontations with a demanding master. Practicing intensively deep in the mountains one is physically and spiritually isolated from normal human intercourse. It is a spiritual desert that tests the outer limits of human endurance. Yet it does not last forever. The end of the training period does not mean that the ascetic has graduated; rather the practice is shifted to a different arena.

After the session ends one has some "free" time to do as he or she wishes: return home, visit relatives, talk with friends, sleep late, eat and drink anything. Earnest seekers of the Way will travel widely, attending training sessions at different temples, searching for the best teachers. However, almost no one remains in the same monastery for his entire life since, as was noted above, it is thought to be both unwise and unnatural for a person not to develop different directions.

I am not about to suggest that Catholic contemplative communities adopt Buddhist practices; on the contrary, I strongly recommend against it. To be sure, there are a number of concepts in Buddhism that appeal to Western contemplatives; however, Christian mystical theology is as rich and varied as any Oriental Way of Liberation, and is often better suited to modern conditions in the West. (I personally found more Zen simplicity in the Trappist monasteries I have visited than in large Zen temples which are full of golden statues, silk brocade, and expensive ornaments.) Japanese and Tibetan priests who are aware of the Catholic contemplative tradition are quite distressed when they see Christian monks practicing zazen or T.M. "Why," they ask, "are they turning their backs on that which they have received from their own patriarchs?"

Buddhists are not interested in dialogue; they are interested in practice. It is not good to mix different traditions, and unnecessary; each tradition maintains a heritage which has a place for every type of spirituality. What is important is to preserve the essence of the teaching—in this case, a life of private and liturgical prayer, silence, manual labor, and study.

After reaffirming their primary dedication to the contemplative life, Catholic monasteries should place less stress on "permanent" vocations, and more on "temporary" vocations—that is, letting anyone who wishes join the community for either a fixed or open-ended period. There could be training sessions of a week, a month, a hundred days, a year. Perhaps after taking some simple vows such as "I promise to obey the rules of this monastery," "I vow to practice diligently for the sake of all," the person would be permitted to wear a suitable habit, live with the other monks or nuns, and

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participate in the monastic regimen. (Actually, such an arrangement is not without precedent. For example, the Desert of Our Lady of Bethlehem near Cordova, Spain, consisted entirely of laymen who made annual, not perpetual, vows and were free to leave once the vows expired.)

If possible, participation should be open to anyone who is willing to observe the rules; a modest monthly fee for room and board would not be unreasonable. Many are unsure of their station in life and a good dose of monastic training could help them regain their equilibrium regardless of what path they ultimately pursue.

I realize that some may argue that stability is the basis of the religious life, or object that no organization can survive without permanent members, yet I believe most orders, active and contemplative, would flourish if final vows were done away with. (Active orders could organize one- or two-year temporary vocations similar to the Peace Corps.) What matters most is voluntary participation with total dedication. The focus of one's spirituality may change over the years and perhaps all religious should be able to freely experience the different stages of lay, contemplative, and active life.

A Catholic monk once asked a Buddhist abbot, "What is the essence of the religious life?" The abbot answered, "Concentrate on practice, keep your mind in the present, and leave the rest to God."

Screen

HEART OF THE MATTER

A WESTERN THAT'S CREDIBLE

HEARTLAND begins with some real slow, squeaky music, and it ends the same. In between, not much of anything happens. That's why I like it. Actually, you could say a lot happens. Eleanor (Conchata Ferrell) and her daughter Jerrine (Megan Folsom) come all the way up to Wyoming to housekeep for Clyde Stewart (Rip Torn), a rancher. Next thing he knows, she's gone and filed on the homestead section adjoining his. Next thing she knows, he's got her thinking she can't go it alone and ought to marry him, which she does. Then he can't get a decent price for his cattle. He refuses to sell the two-year-olds, but that means he's got to keep them over the winter — a task that needs seventy ton of hay where he's only got fifty on hand. Well, the winter is real, real hard, real bad. Jack (Barry Primus), the hired hand to whom Jerrine is so partial, lights out for Mexico before the snow flies because Clyde's got no money left to pay him what's owing. Not only do half the cattle die (enough, almost, to wipe out ten years' work Clyde's put in building his herd), but the baby — the one Ellie had to deliver herself because Clyde couldn't find their ten-mile neighbor, Grandma (Lila Skala), in time — darned if that baby doesn't die, too.

So, as I was saying, the truth is that a lot happens in this movie. But it all happens as if nothing is happening. The train that brings Ellie and Jerrine up to Wyoming at the beginning of the film moves as slowly as the music. We can just tell from the way the cars creak across the prairie that nothing is going to happen sudden-like. And Clyde is such a taciturn Scotsman, as stingy with his words as he is with wages, that nobody can get much of a reaction out of him, either. At one point when Ellie is helping with the chuck wagon while Jack and Clyde round up Grandma's cattle, Ellie complains to Grandma, "I just can't talk to that man," meaning Clyde. "You better learn before winter comes," Grandma advises in her own terse fashion. Clyde's proposal to Ellie some weeks later represents about the third and fourth sentences, respectively, that he's spoken to her since she arrived. One morning toward the end of winter, Jerrine awakes to find her mother and Clyde in the other room standing over their baby in the wash basin. When she sees that the infant, which had had a fever, is completely submerged in the water, head and all, Jerrine gets kind of wide-eyed, but stays mum. Clyde refashions the rough-hewn crib into a little coffin. Ellie shows no emotion whatsoever. Later that spring, Ellie screams and falls to the ground while hanging out wash. Clyde steps over to the stable door to see what's going on, and then just turns back to his chores again after assuring Jerrine her mother is going to be all right now.

This lack of style in the movie is of course a style all its own. It's dead-pan Altman. Both the script by Beth Ferris and the direction by Richard Pearce subscribe to the theory that the only way to deal with the past is to make it baffling, to obscure and limit our image of it. Lines are mumbled, scenes cut short, and almost no exposition or elaboration provided. This is a direction in which the Western has been going for some years now, becoming a kind of minimal art. It makes a certain sense. Indeed, it represents a degree of honesty and truth-in-telling. As the twentieth century moves ever faster and further away from the nineteenth, the hardships, the elementariness, even the emotions of the past become increasingly unimaginable to us. The only solution is to tell a story as simple and unassuming as you can possibly make it. That's what Ferris and Pearce do, and Torn and Ferrell, too, with their inexpressive acting as if they were in a Robert Bresson film.

The result is the only sort of Western that's at all credible any more, one in which the actions shown are not the high, rare drama of gunfights and derring-do, but the most commonplace experiences conceivable. By sticking to the latter, *Heartland* displays modesty that takes a certain courage. How intense its commitment to realism is can be seen in two scenes that are pure documentary of ranch life. One records the slaughter of a pig, the other the birth of a calf. In the second scene, Clyde and Ellie have to assist by getting ropes around the calf while it's still in the uterus and literally pulling it into the world by its heels. In a sense, this is the *dénouement* of the film. It's the second-to-last scene, and the emotion it makes us feel for the travail of this dumb beast shows just how far we have been drawn into the remote, inconceivable world *Heartland* depicts.

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Media

THE KING'S LUCK

REAGAN GETS THE BREAKS, SO FAR

WASHINGTON. A Beverly Hills friend asked me in a letter recently how things are here in "Ronnie's new home," and I answered: very much built around Ronnie. "The president," as they call him here, has so far been a prime exhibit of an ancient quasi-religious category: the king's luck.

Like most kings who have it, Ronald Reagan has helped to make it and has added success to it. Neither the luck nor the success is transferable to anybody else. They depend upon his media past and his media talent; to borrow a term from the books on the universal essence of religion, he gained his *mana* at the movies.

Here are some sentences from one of those books: "Scandinavian sagas tell us of a 'king's luck' to which pertain victory in battle and invulnerability, healing power, and good weather, particularly during sea voyages . . . The king's 'luck,' as it were, overflows . . . the corn grew everywhere it was sown, and herrings were found all round the coast . . ."

I don't know how it's been with the herring round the coast but OPEC has behaved, gas prices have stopped rising, and confrontations have ceased. Libya—a certified bad guy—has been given a neat, painless little defeat. "A Gothic definition of the king calls him 'he in whose luck we conquer.'"

"Ronnie's" luck in his new home town has included having the right kind of assassination attempt, the right kind of showdown with a union, the right kind of international incidents with American planes. You couldn't ask for a much better cast of adversaries than John Hinckley, Robert Poli, and Colonel Qaddafi. Some would add Tip O'Neill and Dan Rostenkowski. The dramatic line has been tidy. The assassination attempt cut early opposition and brought sympathy; the air traffic controllers were making $35,000 a year, and had taken an oath not to strike. The momentous triumphs in Congress on the budget and taxes were well scripted for suspense, provided unappealing and ineffective antagonists, came to a clean resolution, and left even Reagan's opponents awe-struck.

Washington is full of references to neoconservatism, supply-side economics, and the Moral Majority, but surely the broad public's appetite for these is mixed. Ronald Reagan's media-vindicated *mana* had more appeal than David Stockman's economics, Irving Kristol's philosophy, Jerry Falwell's morality, or Jesse Helms's politics. Although he certainly has his "tough" side—these events reveal it—Ronald Reagan nevertheless has been known on the screen for a long time, and known mostly as a nice guy. Most recent presidents have not been nice guys. One can say, without mentioning names, that there has been a lot of neurosis in the Oval office in recent decades; with President Reagan that's gone. His amiable, joking, cowboy-shirted, jelly-bean-eating personality is more notable, at first anyway, than either his or his opponent's ideology. "There you go again, Mr. President," was more memorable than any political line spoken by either participant in the debate, perhaps in the campaign, of 1980. As president, after being shot he joked, "Honey, I forgot to duck," to his wife, and "I hope you're Republicans" to the doctors. His speeches about the City on a Hill, and Gosh, America is swell, and now look at this little chart, give egg-heads a slight headache but work with the public. At once an actor and a true believer, he has the great gift, for mass democratic politics, of speaking platitudes sincerely. Behind the presidential corn, grace, and humor there is an already established, already familiar money-in-the-bank persona from years of movies and television. Opponents mocked *Bedtime for Bonzo* and highbrows scoffed at the idea of a B movie actor in the highest political office in the free world, but the public didn't blink.

That public is of course the key. Coming from Los Angeles to Washington early in the summer, I heard a memorable offhand remark on that subject by the bright Massachusetts Democratic Congressman Barney Frank. Commenting on the slogans about transferring power "back" from "the politicians" to "the people," Frank admitted that politicians like himself have their defects but added: "the people . . . Well, the people aren't any bargain either." It was gratifying to hear so unWhitmanesque a comment from a congressman. The "people," who are indeed no bargain, make Raymond Burr an authority on law and crime because he plays Perry Mason on the screen,and are now making Ed Asner the nation's best known newspaperman because he plays Lou Grant on the screen. During the network coverage of Watergate hearings, thousands of viewers called network affiliates in anger and consternation because, they thought, the World was still Turning and the Guiding Light still shining and the Search for Tomorrow still searching—the soaps were still soaping—somewhere, out there, blocked from view by Sam Ervin, *et al.* Such a public isn't going to have any trouble transferring Ronald Reagan to the White House.

In the White House Reagan has displayed the media-derived talent for casting events in a bright-colored and simple dramatic line, so as to create emotional clarity for that public. Given that he is already a familiar nice guy, then being "tough" and sticking-to-his-guns become added elements of public appeal. Clear. Plain. Hard line. Don't yield. Did the controllers take an oath? Sock it to them. Can you imagine Jimmy Carter dealing with the air controllers? "And another point . . . and another point . . ." Can you imagine Carter making the tax cut speech? Or Nixon trying to extract sympathy for his courageous decisions? Even if these other presidents had taken the same positions that Reagan did, they would have lost support doing it. Reagan may have had better personal relations with congressional Democrats while beating them than Carter did while supposedly collaborating with them.

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Reagan spent his shaping years as a member of what my epistolatory friend, a native Southern Californian, calls, with some condescension, "the movies." The word used thus refers, I learned, not to films but to a social set . . . from an old established Los Angeles point-of-view, I gathered, a slightly undesirable social set. But however undesirable they may seem to the old Los Angeles aristocracy, and to highbrows from the East, "the movies" included people with distinct modern talents, and developed in them distinct modern skills . . . in the most visible group the skills not simply of actors on a stage, but of "stars" on a screen.

Meanwhile across the continent there has developed another town with its own version of "the movies" and its own stars. Washington, too, has a social set of insiders in an overheated industry, and they, too, constantly appraise the central figures in insiders' terms. There is the same admiration for skill and technique despite the slush in which it is imbedded; the same admiration for success, just because it is success, while it is successful. Like Hollywood, Washington is a place of sudden, surface reputations; of exaggerated momentums; of exaggerated volatile ratings; and of an endless fertilizer of gossip enriching the exaggerations. If you are only as good as your last picture, that at least means a great advantage when your last picture was a good one, because of what that principle does to the competition. In the corresponding East Coast star world, Ronald Reagan, in the late spring and summer, was given the highest rating. His talent and success with Congress and the public were appreciated and praised not only by members of his own party, but at least in the private circuit of conversation, by Democrats and liberals too. The line was that Reagan can do both the outside persuading by a speech and the inside persuading by a one-on-one conversation. Carter—it was said—could do neither; Kennedy the first but not the second; LBJ the second but not the first. Reagan is the first one since FDR to do both well. It is a world that takes that "merely artistic view of politics," as Jacques Maritain called it—that appreciates technique and success without regard to the ends they serve.

Despite talk of a huge conservative movement of opinion, Reagan himself seems indispensable to the conservatives' specific triumphs of 1980-81. Right-wing Republicans surely will find it difficult to come up with another candidate who voted for FDR four times, had an impoverished Irish Democrat for a father, and was president of a labor union. They'll find it even harder to combine that with established and efficacious media charm.

It works only with Reagan in isolation. If you put his wife Nancy into the picture, with her jewels, her gowns, her $1650 handbag and her manicurist flying across the continent to do her nails, the effect changes. If you add the Justin Darts, the Bloomingdales, the Walter Annenbergs, the Joseph Coors, coming in chauffered limousines to white tie parties with their rich friends the Reagans, and making let-them-eat-jelly-beans comments, the picture of Reagan as an amiable cowboy vanishes altogether. Now, as the budget cuts begin to be felt, and the interest rates stay up, and it becomes more evident to the broad public how the tax cut was skewed, and the economy doesn't improve, that "luck" may turn around. Winning clearcut personal victories has its disadvantage: "But if the harvest was bad the peasants blamed the king." So the word from the East Coast to the West Coast is this: Ronnie was doing better here than he ever did at Warner Brothers, but it may not last.

WILLIAM LEE MILLER

Books: IS SOCIOBIOLOGY DESTINY?

HUMAN NATURE AND HISTORY
Kenneth Bock
Columbia Univ. Press, $18.95, 241 pp.

THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS
J.H. Crook
Oxford Univ. Press, $39, 462 pp.

SOCIOBIOLOGY EXAMINED
Ashley Montagu, Editor
Oxford Univ. Press, $19.95, 366 pp.

FIGHTING FOR LIFE
Walter J. Ong
Cornell Univ. Press, $14.95, 231 pp.

Arthur L. Caplan

SCIENCE is often depicted and perceived by Americans as an emotional antidote to the psychic aches and pains of modern life. Does a soul exist who is utterly indifferent to the electronic image of the graceful space-shuttle touching down in the California desert? Who amongst us does not thrill from the comfort of our armchairs, to feel the sun beating down upon our brow as we ply the seven seas with Captain Cousteau and his gallant crew in pursuit of some tidbit of oceanographic knowledge? Whether voyaging out past the farthest galaxies with Dr. Sagan or peering into the lymphatic system under the expert guidance of Dr. Miller, science can be a heady, even liberating experience.

But there exists a darker, less-appealing vision to be gotten from contemporary science. The very methods and techniques that reveal the natural world to be such a marvelous, intricate, and fascinating puzzle reveal darker and even terrifying images when applied to ourselves. Consider the view of man presented by the sociobiologist Richard Dawkins in *The Selfish Gene:*

> "The replicators which survived were the ones which built survival machines for themselves to live in . . . Now they swarm in huge colonies,

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safe inside gigantic lumbering robots, sealed off from the outside world, communicating with it by tortuous indirect routes, manipulating it by remote control. They are in you and me; they created us, body and mind; and their preservation is the ultimate rationale for our existence. They have come a long way — those replicators. Now they go by the name of genes, and we are their survival machines."

This is hardly the stuff of romantic vision. Hearing that we are merely nesting grounds for squiggly little strips of nucleic acid and nothing more is information more likely to result in nausea than in setting our hearts aflutter with anticipation over the next bit of scientific news. It is hard to feel dignified on a voyage past the rings of Saturn believing that one's gonads are the ultimate rationale behind the occurrence of the trip.

Sociobiology represents an effort to bring to fruition the rather unnerving chain of reasoning set in motion with publication of *The Origin of Species* over 120 years ago. Sociobiologists such as Dawkins, E.O. Wilson, Richard Alexander, W.D. Hamilton, and many others are engaged in an effort to bridge the gap that so concerned Charles Darwin throughout his life — the application of evolutionary insights to human beings and their behavior.

Of course it is true that Darwin, and many other biologists since, have presented a vision of man as a lineal descendent of beasts — a vision that has elicited a host of vociferous criticisms from diverse quarters over the years. However, it is one thing for persons to accommodate themselves to a world view in which an ape or dinosaur occupies pride of place in the family tree. It is something else again to accommodate to the view that the legacy of that descent is alive and well, and actively influencing our behavior on a day-to-day basis.

This evolutionary legacy is precisely what sociobiology claims to have discovered about our behavior. Where we normally see generosity, kindness, empathy, duty, and altruism — in helping a friend fix a flat tire, in helping our children do their homework — sociobiologists claim to have discovered only manipulation, egotism and self-interest. By viewing behavior in terms of reproductive costs and benefits, sociobiologists in biology, anthropology, political science, and sociology are attempting to recast seemingly altruistic acts in terms of reciprocal payoffs for the parties involved, or in terms of advantages to genetic kith and kin. The tradition of glorifying in poetry and prose our unique sociality — that we alone are cultural creatures, political animals, moral beings — is seen in the cold light of sociobiology as just so much self-deceptive arrogant puffery. We are no different, the sociobiologists note, in our manifest behavior from ants, monkeys, and other social denizens of the natural world — sociable when it pays us to be so, nasty and mean-spirited when it does not.

The response of those academics concerned to tout and defend the autonomy and significance of culture, ethics, and politics has been, for the most part, to ignore the sociobiological vision as scientism gone blatantly bananas. If contemporary sociobiologists choose to believe that Carl Sagan, Jacques Cousteau, Jonathan Miller, and the rest of humankind are merely zomby-like robotic vehicles for abetting reproduction and genetic continuity, then so much the sillier for them. However, there are those in other quarters who have chosen to speak out in protest against the view of man as robot.

It is no accident that creationism is enjoying something of a revival these days. Not only is the political climate conducive to fundamentalist values, there are many persons scattered around America who somehow perceive sociobiology and other efforts to study human behavior biologically as the beginning of science's "final solution" to anthropomorphism and anthrocentrism. The Moral Majority may not be very clear about who its secular enemies are, but they have obviously caught the scent of Darwinism waiting to cross the last thresholds of human uniqueness—and they do not like what they smell.

Not all academics have chosen silence as the best response to the sociobiological view of human nature and behavior. The authors collected in Ashley Montagu's anthology note with disdain the crude genetic determinism lurking behind the guise of sociobiology. They see no reason to ignore the causal efficacy of intentions, reasons, purposes, and motives in explaining human social behavior. They are especially critical of the sociobiologists' cavalier treatment of concepts such as altruism and selfishness. Many of them note that there is absolutely no reason to suspect that Darwinism will shed great light on cultural evolution—a process that appears qualitatively different from the biological events which govern the transmission of information among cultureless creatures such as bugs and baboons.

Kenneth Bock, in his carefully argued and highly readable work, notes that sociobiologists overlook the peculiarly unique set of events we refer to as history in explaining human activity. It is fallacious in the extreme, Bock argues, to see human behavior as the by-product of a static system of genes in a given environment. Historical factors must be cited to explain the existence of any particular environment, but this is precisely what sociobiology, with its ahistorical,

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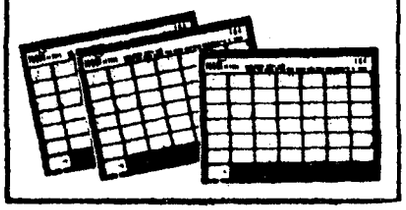

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mechanistic laws of reproductive advantage and reciprocal benefits, overlooks.

Professors Ong and Crook are less appalled by the suggestion that biology is destiny. They seek accommodation between social, scientific, theological, and sociobiological approaches to understanding human activity. Multiple levels of causality — biological, social, cultural, and intentional — are the means by which genes and spirit can live in peaceful co-existence, leaving psyches and the traditional academic disciplines relatively intact.

Surely these responses are to be preferred to the intellectual Ludditism of the fundamentalists. They are also preferable to the ostrich-like posture displayed by most academics in the humanities on hearing that sociobiologists are attempting to breach the conceptual wall of the fact/value distinction.

Ultimately, however, the books under review do not quite accomplish their intended debunking of Darwinism run amok in the form of sociobiology. The criticisms leveled against this nascent science seem driven as much by a collective recoiling from the dark vision of Dawkins's "lumbering robots" as they do by sound methodological critique. Invoking the holy words of mind, intention, culture, free-will, and uniqueness will not frighten this new breed of reductionistic determinists as they have in the past. What is needed in addition to these concepts is an analysis of mind, intention, culture, and reasoning that can stand in explanatory contra-distinction to biological determinism. Since science abhors a theoretical vacuum, sociobiology is likely to rush into the humanities and social sciences in places where nothing better is available — and those places are numerous. We may find the robotic view of human nature expounded by sociobiology simplistic, repugnant, even unworthy of contempt. But until we understand ourselves better as human beings, it is a vision that is likely to continue to haunt us.

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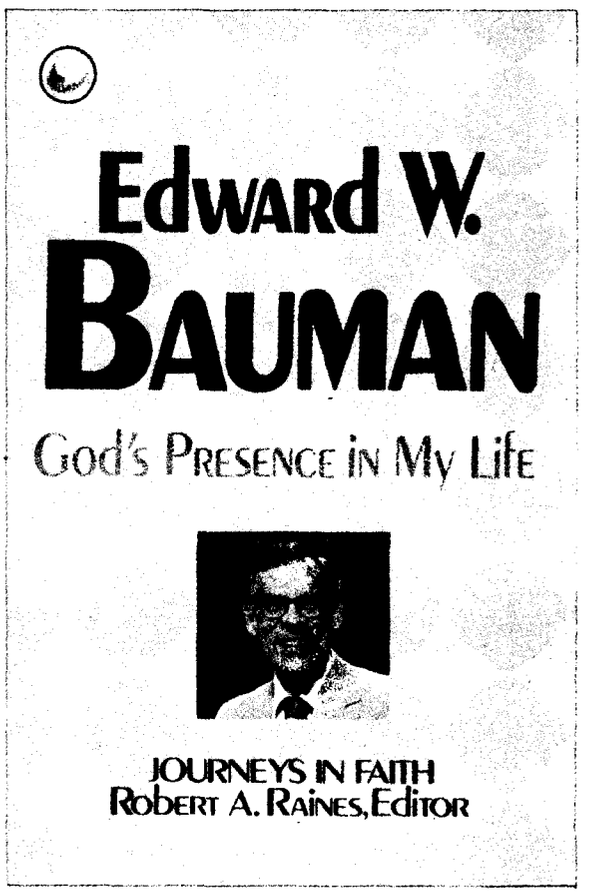

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sion of philosophy as an autobiographical task, Nietzsche perceived himself as a didact, prophet, cultural psychologist, and moral revolutionist whose ideas were pitched toward actualization. In his letters he spoke of his "physical way of thinking," by which his entire organism passionately engaged his intellectual project.

One of the major tasks of Nietzsche's earlier biographers was to correct the false image coined by the philosopher's sister Elisabeth and further debased by Nazi propaganda. This restoration work was carried out by Walter Kaufmann, though neither he nor Hollingdale, Nietzsche's other biographer in English, scrutinized the ordinary details of Nietzsche's life. Ronald Hayman's intention in his new biography is first of all to establish a correct and orderly sequence of events, a calendar life. Drawing heavily on materials in the Nietzsche archives and translating from many of Nietzsche's letters and from work no longer readily available in translation, Hayman intelligently reconstructs, on a day by day basis, Nietzsche's early years, his schooling, his encounters with Burckhardt, Wagner, and others, and his wanderings across Europe. He also documents, in moving detail, the extraordinary physical pain (headaches, eye ailments, vomiting) which Nietzsche suffered throughout his life, and the endless series of attempted cures, the remedial baths, cold-water treatments, bloodlettings, mountain seclusions, and dietary remedies.

Hayman's method is to counterpoint his narrative with remarks, more often descriptive than analytical, on the content of the books Nietzsche was writing at the time. His intention clearly is to reconstruct the life of mind as it is lived out. But Hayman's analysis of both the biographical and intellectual materials is often so superficial that Nietzsche's career is presented as a compilation of episodic anecdotes. His materials are plentiful and are therefore quite useful to any student of Nietzsche's life, but the mass of data never coheres as an eloquent biographical argument.

For example, in his chapter on *Human All Too Human* Hayman notes that "Nietzsche's psychological observations were leading him to a radical reassessment of conventional assumptions about virtues and vices." There follows a brief paraphrase of Nietzsche's revaluation of "vanity," which leads in turn to a terse critique of Plato's belief in the abolition of private property, prompting Hayman to observe that "Marxism was based on the same fallacy." Then comes a brief critique of Marxist theory. These passing observations, each important but each underdeveloped, are then abruptly punctuated by fact: "On September 17 Nietzsche left St. Moritz to meet Elisabeth in Chur." But we still haven't received a detailed (and necessary) analysis of Nietzsche's "radical reassessment" of conventional moral categories, nor does such analysis appear elsewhere in the book. One cannot gain a clear view of Nietzsche's life of mind without a deep understanding of the concepts of *ressentiment*, self-overcoming, "going under," and (most notoriously perhaps) "hardness." Hayman unfortunately slights these, and he is too quick to view Nietzsche's words and actions according to the familiar psychoanalytical paradigms often put forth to explain an obsessive or deviant behavior: oedipal stress, sublimated eroticism, latent sado-masochism, and so forth.

> *For Nietzsche a philosopher's ideas were less important than the quality of his striving towards existence on a philosophical or suprahistorical plane. In short, he must be a hero, as Schopenhauer had been. This attitude . . . is explicit in one of Nietzsche's unpublished notes. "A man's character is worth a hundred systems. . . . There is something in a philosopher there can never be in a philosophy: the origin of many philosophies – the great man."* —Ronald Hayman
> *Nietzsche*

The accretion of details—the knitting of fact, quote, and paraphrase—turns to Hayman's advantage in tracing the development of Nietzsche's heroic solitude, which reached its first peak in *Zarathustra*. The hero was one who dared to convert intense negativity into a positive life force; this inverted vitalism entailed rigorous solitude, a heroic concentration of intellectual and physical energies. Hayman also notes the frequency of mountain and desert metaphors in Nietzsche's earlier work, especially in *Zarathustra*, but he stops short of analyzing the critical importance of Nietzsche's poetry of self-overcoming.

The chapter on Lou Salomé, along with Cosima Wagner the most important woman in Nietzsche's life, is extremely informative and at times moving, but Hayman's analysis of the termination of the relationship is reticent and inconclusive. So are his discussions of the other women in Nietzsche's life. To what extent did Nietzsche view his relationships with women as contests, tests of self-overcoming, applications of moral revaluation? To explain the strain of misogyny in Nietzsche's work as reflexive sublimation is not enough.

To interpret the turns in Nietzsche's life and thought, Hayman frequently relies on an oversimplified etiology. For instance, at one point he notes that "at the crossroads of Nietzsche's development it was nearly always illness that took charge." True as far as it goes. This is the biographical datum, the telling coincidence, but it falls short of connecting Nietzsche's attitude toward his own sickliness with his valuation of will and

REVIEWERS

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self-determination. Here as elsewhere Hayman acts as an accurate guide to the difficult and painful chronology of Nietzsche's life. But he never quite arrives at a whole portrait of the evolution and fusion of will, moral disposition, erotic engagement, workaday habits, cultural memory and intellectual discipline which go to make up human temperament.

Telling the untold stories

THE WOMAN'S TALE
A JOURNAL OF INNER EXPLORATION
Ronda Chervin and Mary Neill
Seabury, $6.95, 160 pp.

DIVING DEEP AND SURFACING
WOMEN WRITERS ON SPIRITUAL QUEST
Carol P. Christ
Beacon, $9.95, 159 pp.

Francine Cardman

How to tell the untold stories of women? How to fathom the depths of women's being? How to bring the experience of women to consciousness, to reflection, to articulation, to freedom? Compelling questions, questions that touch one deeply, questions that moved these three women to words, to writing, and finally to these books. What is the story that they tell, and how well do they tell it?

By calling their exploration of stories in which women figure "the woman's tale," Chervin and Neill seem to claim a kind of universality for the abstract picture of woman that they discern in these tales. And so they treat of archetypes (or near-archetypes) rather than the concrete experience of women; and when they address these images from their own particular experience, it is not primarily their experience *as women* out of which they speak. The sort of generality one might expect from the title does not emerge, nor is there a satisfying particularity, for the tale as they tell it could, except for occasional detail or observations, as well be "the man's tale." The reasons for this approach, as well as its consequences, are apparent early on. Each author begins with an introductory description of herself, answering such questions as, "what do I love/like about being a woman?" and "what do I hate/dislike about being a woman?" Each takes care to dissociate herself from feminism or "the women's liberation movement," preferring to revel in being a woman and in her own personal struggles and achievements, apart from any political or philosophical commitment to women as such. Neither notices that the stories of women which they discuss (fairy tales, for the most part) have been written by *men*. And this is fateful, if not fatal, for their undertaking. For, as Carol Christ observes, "Women have lived in the interstices between their own vaguely understood experience and the shapings given to experience by the stories of men." Simply because women are analyzing and reflecting on these stories, therefore, does not make for a "woman's tale."

In the actual analysis of the stories, it becomes clear that the book is not basically about women or their experience *as women*. Rather, the focus is on the "inner journey," the "spiritual life" or "the soul," defined and described in largely psychological and personal categories. When theological connections are made (as they sometimes are, much too lightly and occasionally inappropriately), they are often simply transpositions of one set of categories into the other. The vision of the spiritual journey as Chervin and Neill describe it is too individual, too inner, and too isolated—and too dependent on therapeutic insights from counseling and psychology. Reflections on the stories thus lack any social or political analysis: no effort is made to ask what the stories are saying *about* women, their place in the social structure, how men regard them, what the power relationships as well as the personal relationships between women and men are like. In writing about the story of

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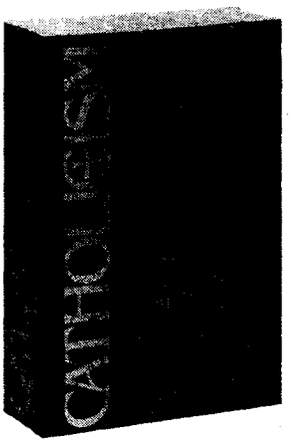

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"The Red Shoes," for instance, Chervin relates her fascination with this tale and the significant impulsivity vs. patience, never commenting on the violence and grotesqueness of the ending, in which the only way the girl can be rid of the red shoes and stop dancing is to have her feet chopped off; nor does she consider why this is often the fate of women who disrupt the social order, who can't be controlled, indeed, who cannot control themselves (who are not free). Similarly with Neill. Her discussion of "Rapunzel": she speaks (too easily) of "redemptive suffering" (Rapunzel's), but doesn't ask what it is between wicked witches and lovely girls that occasions such fear and hatred, that fuels the conflict between young and old, beautiful and unattractive women. This lack of perspective and perception is what makes *The Woman's Tale* so unsatisfactory to me.

Diving Deep and Surfacing, on the other hand is a very satisfying book. Its perspective on women's experience and their need to tell their own stories is clear, and clearly concerned with women. Its purposes are sharply delimited, its conceptual categories consciously chosen and carefully defined, and the "stories" it analyzes are by and about women—novels, poetry, choreopoem. Carol Christ's exploration of the spiritual quest of women writers (Kate Chopin, Margaret Atwood, Doris Lessing, Adrienne Rich, Ntozake Shange) is both literary and cultural criticism. Her post-Christian and feminist perspective is apt to distress those who think of "spirituality" as an exclusively Christian affair. But her non-theistic description of spirituality and its relationship to storytelling is carefully worked out and rings true.

First, the terms. Christ begins with a distinction between the *spiritual quest*—"woman's awakening to the depths of her soul [used in a non-dualistic sense] and her position in the universe"—and the *social quest*—"woman's struggle to gain respect, equality and freedom in society—in work, in politics, and in relationships with women, men and children." The distinction is helpful in understanding Christ's purposes in the book, but she cautions against reading it as any real separation of the spiritual and the social since they are but "two dimensions of the same struggle." Her description of the four moments of the spiritual quest—the experience of nothingness, awakening to the great powers of being, mystical identification and insight, and new naming of self and reality—provides helpful categories for understanding the works examined. I found her insight into the differences between women's and men's experience of nothingness and awakening striking.

Next, the telling of the story. Christ skillfully explicates the texts she's chosen, analyzing the quest, pointing out and commenting on themes, and raising important questions about women's efforts to find an image of self—to find, as Doris Lessing wrote of Martha Quest, "that woman . . . Martha described vaguely but to her own satisfaction as 'a person.'" Christ is not afraid to be critical of images that seem less than adequate (Chopin, Lessing), nor is she grudging in appreciation, even when she cannot finally share a writer's vision (as with Rich's lesbianism). Her explanation of why Rich's "homesickness for a woman, for ourselves" is important for heterosexual women (and men) is perceptive; her discussion of Atwood's *Surfacing* is compelling. And her treatment of *For Colored Girls* reveals a sensitivity to the connections and disconnections between racism and sexism, black and white women's experience.

My complaints, then, are few. I wonder if the attitude toward abortion in *Surfacing* is as easily susceptible of Christ's explanation as she suggests. The final chapter, on a vision of women's culture, is too summary and tries to do too much, even while it corroborates Christ's analysis by connecting it to movements in women's music, art, and "grassroots spirituality." And Christ never addresses directly the problematic fact that in all the works, women's quest for wholeness leads them apart from men; yet she hopes for a future wholeness for humankind, female and male.

"Women's stories have not been told." So begins chapter 1. By the end of chapter 8, however, it is clear that the telling has begun at last.

Hawthorne, public & political

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE
A BIOGRAPHY
Arlin Turner
Oxford University, $20, 457 pp.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE
IN HIS TIMES
James R. Mellow
Houghton Mifflin, $19.95, 684 pp.

Michael True

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE maintains his place among America's most enduring writers, and justifiably so, since few understood so early and plumbed so deeply the peculiar genius of the American character. Few, also, have been so consciously political in their fiction, and any attempt to substantially alter the social structure of this country must attend to the powerful conservative rhetoric of his fiction. Hawthorne appears to have been more concerned with the social implications of Hester Prynne's rebellion in *The Scarlet Letter*, for example, than he was with the moral implications of her sin, and he speaks satirically about Holgraves's anarchism, in *The House of the Seven Gables*, before that young rebel is "saved" by Phoebe Pyncheon.

Neo-conservatism is not so "neo," in other words, to the American scene. It is central to the rhetoric of the best and most influential 19th century artists, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, as well as Hawthorne and Melville. Each, in his own way, was suspicious of the revolutionary aspirations of Thomas Paine, William Lloyd Garrison, and their followers, and Hawthorne, particularly, in his friendships and in his fiction, indicated a similar conservatism toward radical reformers—feminists, abolitionists, and anarchists—in his day.

Earlier critics and biographers failed to

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do justice to the significance of Hawthorne's public life, concentrating instead on his long seclusion as an apprentice writer and his personal reticence among the more talkative Concord Brahmins. Since Randall Stewart's biography and his equally important edition of Hawthorne's notebooks, in the 1940's, however, we have a better understanding of the relationship between his dominant aesthetic and the highly political nature of his moral tales. These two excellent, but very different biographies cast still more light on this interesting aspect of a great novelist and short story writer and, in turn, on the nature of American culture—how it works and how, over a period of time, it maintains itself in a variety of ways.

Nathaniel Hawthorne: A Biography, by the late Arlin Turner, is a fitting memorial to a life-long student of the novelist. As a teacher, principally at Duke University; as editor of *American Literature*, the major scholarly periodical in that discipline; and as author of two previous books on Hawthorne, Turner made numerous contributions toward this generation's appreciation and understanding of his subject, and his biography presents that knowledge in a straightforward and readable manner.

There is little interpretation of events or of the fiction. Turner chooses "to place Hawthorne's works, a good portion of them, in the context of his life" and to leave readers, "to supply their own interpretations and applications." One can refer to Turner's book with confidence, in verifying dates, places, and events and the bearing they have on the career of the writer. It is the work of a scholar, cautious, perhaps, or at least modest before a man whose fiction responds to the preoccupations of successive generations of readers and to a variety of interpretations.

A portrait done in 1840, shortly before his marriage to Sophia Peabody, shows Hawthorne, in the words of his sister-in-law, "in all the splendor of his young beauty." Numerous others commented on his good looks—Anthony Trollope was quoted as swearing Hawthorne as "the handsomest Yankee that ever walked the planet"—and on his reticence. Emerson, who knew him for more than twenty years admitted never having really won his friendship, and Jonathan Cilley, a college friend, said Hawthorne lived "in a mysterious world of thought and imagination which he never permits me to enter."

The principal events in Hawthorne's life, in addition to the publication of his major novels and short stories between 1837 and 1860, included his time at Brook Farm, the basis of his satiric portrait of that experiment, in *The Blithedale Romance*; his happy marriage to Sophia Peabody, the daughter of a prominent Salem family, in 1842; political appointments to custom houses in Boston and Salem and, after the election of his college friend, Franklin Pierce, to the presidency, to a consulship in Liverpool, 1853-57. Returning home, after travel through France and Italy with his family, Hawthorne spent his last years, before his death in 1864, as a writer particularly of nonfiction, as a member of the famous Saturday Club—with Emerson, Holmes, Lowell, Whittier, and Longfellow—and in several political skirmishes in the loyal defense of the unpopular Pierce.

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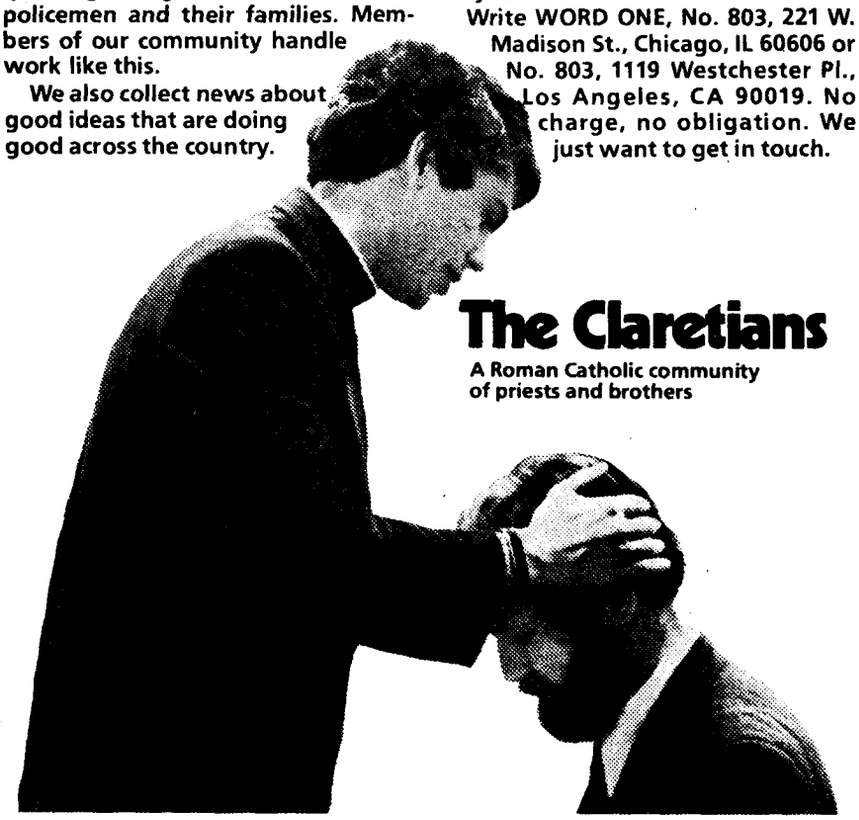

The Claretians

A Roman Catholic community of priests and brothers

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James R. Mellow's *Hawthorne in His Times*, as the title suggests, places the novelist clearly in the midst of these events and the distinguished personages with whom he lived, showing Hawthorne as a man shaped by—in agreement with or in conflict with—the dominant ideas of his age. Mellow does so in a way that is always interesting, in prose that is vigorous and resonant, never merely impressionistic or clever. He takes time, without interrupting the narrative, to give brief introductions as well to Hawthorne's many literary associates, Fuller, Alcott, Thoreau, and Melville, as well as members of the Saturday Club. Particularly vivid scenes dramatizing Hawthorne's productive and eventful life include those of the author caring for his children while Sophia is away visiting her sister, the wife of Horace Mann; his important friendship with Melville, with its erotic overtones and, then, the characteristic breaking away; his complaints about nudity in painting and sculpture—man's clothes "are as natural to him as his skin, and sculptors have no more right to undress him than to flay him"; his lecturing a New Orleans clergyman after he spent a week in a Liverpool brothel and then had to borrow money from Hawthorne in order to return home.

Such pertinent biographical details from both biographies send the reader back to the novels with a new understanding of how and why Hawthorne dealt with various aspects of human life, including questions about the nature of society and the future of the American nation. By 1845, Mellow says, Hawthorne "had acquired the talent for rationalization by which political careers were sustained," and had cast his lot, for various reasons, with the conservative wing of the Democratic party. Edward Dicey, an English critic of the time, wrote that "the whole nature of Hawthorne shrank from the rough wear and tear inseparable from great popular movements of any kind," adding that "the details of a popular agitation were strangely offensive to him." A statement about his hatred of "disorder, broken rules, and weariness of discipline" by his youngest child, Rose, later a Dominican nun and founder of hospitals for the terminally ill, has some bearing here, also. No wonder that the casualness of Brook Farm upset Hawthorne and that the "right" way to proceed, in his fiction, is often presented as being with the status quo. Anyone who challenged that order was likely to find himself or herself roundly criticized.

Thus did one of our greatest novelists help to shape the political character that continues to dominate much of our national life and to impede any substantial change in the social order.

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In Brief

SMALL TOWN AMERICAN: A NARRATIVE HISTORY 1620—THE PRESENT, *by Richard Lingeman, Putnam, $15.95, 495 pp.*

In American folklore the small town is either Eden or Zenith and one of the considerable accomplishments of Richard Lingeman's "Small Town America" is that his protrait is balanced, whole and unburdened by either hostility or sentimentality in its pursuit of the reality behind the twin myths.

It is also affectionate, and, above all, a work of first-rate historical and literary scholarship. There have been other studies of small town life in America, and Lingeman has absorbed them all,

(Continued on page 574)

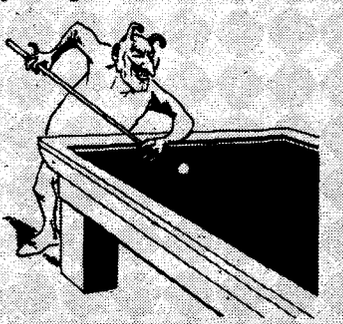
THE AVERAGE MAN or woman of letters may expect to read twelve to fifteen thousand books in the course of a career in teaching, writing, and research. Of that formidable number, perhaps we value most highly and cherish best those books which can give some genuinely useful insight into how one

The Assertive Christian, by Michael Emmons and David Richardson, Winston, $5.95, 179 pp.

might approach the task of creating one's own human being, one's self.

A fresh appraisal of the Christian pattern for human interaction is offered by Michael Emmons and David Richardson in *The Assertive Christian*. Now on first blush you might take the two terms in that intriguing title to be mutually exclusive. Not so, say the authors. Jesus and numerous other biblical personages behaved in assertive ways, which is to say that they openly and honestly expressed themselves "without running roughshod over other people." To turn the other cheek is a properly assertive response in situations of conflict: it is a "stay-in-there" response, the one to be preferred to the alternatives of fight or flight. And "apologizing when you are wrong is perhaps one of the hardest assertions of all," say Emmons and Richardson. The book rehearses specific situations in counseling and in parish politics, and suggests appropriately assertive courses of action. There is comfort aplenty here for those of us who dislike the equation of Christianity with domestic peace at any price.

Speaking of assertive Christians . . .



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Religious booknotes

The task of creating one's self

Marianne Sawicki

Daniel Berrigan has gathered together some autobiographical jottings for a volume in Abingdon's series "Journeys in Faith," to which Martin E. Marty also recently contributed his *By Way of Response*. Berrigan's book is called *Ten Commandments for the Long Haul*. In the first half of it, pur-

Ten Commandments for the Long Haul,** by Daniel Berrigan, **Abingdon, $9.95, 160 pp.

portedly a diary, we are treated to random flashbacks and reflections penned during a semester which Berrigan spent recently at the Jesuit seminary in Berkeley. Here is the sour and the bitter, the salt and just a little sweet, of the poet's incisive conscience. In the second half are the commandments: a selection of the terse words of Jesus, such as "Do not be afraid," and, "Go, teach," with meditations. This set of commandments seems more adventuresome than the original ten. Here, I think, is a good book to save for rumination on a quiet train ride in the indefinite future, and immediately I recognize in that thought the self-defensive recoil typically experienced by many readers of Berrigan. (Don't rattle my human project just now, Dan, with your troublesome stories!)

Nothing beats a story's magnetic power to polarize life projects whose path it crosses. The phenomenon is used to advantage by John A. Sanford, who presents four familiar life-stories from the Hebrew Scriptures using a depth-psychological angle in *The Man Who Wrestled With God*. Sanford, a priest and analyst, proposes in his Jungian retelling of the old biographies a plausible explanation for the healing, whole-making power which people of faith tradi-

The Man Who Wrestled With God,** by John A. Sanford, **Paulist, $6.95, 126 pp.

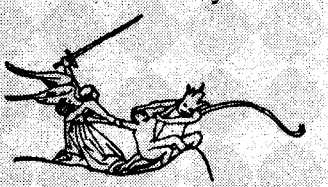
tionally have experienced in imaginatively reading the Scriptures.

Stories of a different sort put the heart and soul in a most extraordinary book by missioner Joseph G. Healey about the young church of Tanzania, *A Fifth Gospel*. This is an engaging glimpse of the cultural experience of rural Africans — time and mourning, welcoming a visitor, waiting patiently for public transportation or medical care, walking together with friends — and of Christianity's incarnation therein. One suspects that the homespun texture of the prose is calculated to generate support in the United States for the missions; nevertheless, the sympathetic and detailed treatment of Julius Nyerere's *Ujamaa* socialism, that is, socialism conceived after the model of the African extended family, and of Bishop Chris-

A Fifth Gospel: The Experience of Black Christian Values,** by Joseph Healey, **Orbis, $7.95, 220 pp.

topher Mwoleka's corresponding organization of lay leadership in local church units, is valuable and instructive. The considerable human appeal of this book aside, it ought to be read carefully as a forecast for the future of the universal church and the church in the United States. The same Spirit who found Wojtyla in Warsaw breathes today in the villages of Rulenge Diocese.

Three recent scholarly books de-



serve a greeting. Joseph A. Fitzmyer has collected essays on biblical topics spanning a decade in *To Advance the Gospel*. The third volume of Bernard Häring's *Free and Faithful in Christ*, entitled *Light to the World*, has appeared. Its two parts, "Bioethics" and "Healing of Public Life," offer conservative but freshly and compassionately reasoned approaches to the moral issues of abortion, war, and the threatened environment, among many others. Joseph Martos has produced the first credible comprehensive

To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies,** by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., **Crossroad, $19.95, 278 pp.

Free and Faithful in Christ,** Volume 3: **Light to the World,** by Bernard Häring, **Crossroad, $17.50, 451 pp.

Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church,** by Joseph Martos, **Doubleday, $15.95, 548 pp.

textbook of sacramental theology in this country since Vatican II upset the liturgical applecart nearly twenty years ago. His *Doors to the Sacred* looks like a solid theoretical and historical treatment of the sacraments. Professors of liturgy and of religious education will rejoice to see this text, though they may wish to supplement it with a treatment of ministry and to update its account of the current posi-

The Francis Book,** compiled and edited by Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M., **Collier/Macmillan, $12.95, 223 pp.

tion of theologians such as Edward Schillebeeckx.

And for dessert: *The Francis Book* comes to us from Roy M. Gasnick, who has collected pictures and essays from quite diverse sources into a large and appealing paperback volume celebrating the eight-hundredth birthday of Assisi's most famous son. Delightful!

MARIANNE SAWICKI

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along with unpublished letters and documents. He was born and grew up in Crawfordsville, Ind. ("The Athens of Indiana") and in the writing of this book he visited a host of small towns in every part of the United States. The result is a work that will surely stand as the classic study of the subject for many years to come. . . .

Any half-dozen citizens chosen at random would certainly free-associate the words "small town America" with words ("sleepy . . . hypocritical . . . provincial . . . stagnant . . . smug . . .") that are themselves not associated with liveliness of subject matter. Yet Lingeman's book is more than lively, it brings to full life a world: "It was a time when—in the nostalgic memories of some at least—life was lived out in the soft light of a tree-shaded street on a summer afternoon, to the soft slip-clop of horses, the drone of bees and cicadas, the clink of ice in the lemonade pitcher, the creak of the porch swing—a time of pause and prosperity." And not merely the softer side of that world: ". . . every town had its 'shacktown' where the very poor lived . . . Shacktown was the bottom of the heap, the end of the line; its inhabitants were nonpersons, the invisible poor, excluded from the community. About the only social services they received were blows from a policeman's club when they were obstreperous and baskets from the Ladies' Aid when they were hungry."

Small towns prevailed or, at any rate, endured, especially in literature. Willa Cather, Edgar Lee Masters, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser, William Allen White, Booth Tarkington and the rest, they're all here, grinding axes, fondly remembering. Even a lover of big boulevards and Broadway like Fitzgerald has a few evocative lines about small towns, but those Lingeman quotes serve also to bring back other lines about "lost Swede towns" and fading postmarks from upstate New York and also remind you of all the major writers, Fitzgerald included, whose most damning indictment of small town America was their near-silence on the subject.

STEPHEN DARST

Correspondence

(Continued from page 546)

relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, and further assurance against the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries. When negotiating the Non-Proliferation Treaty with the Soviet Union and a number of *non*-nuclear countries, I saw how closely these two objectives depend on each other. Also, I came to realize that however difficult it may be for American leaders to take new initiatives in the field of arms restraint, it is far more difficult for Soviet leaders to do so, given the extreme rigidities of their system. A special responsibility thus falls on us, whether we like it or not.

As one who has followed this subject closely for many years both while serving in the government and prior to, and since, that service, I find the present stance of our government disappointing. Our arms control apparatus seems to have been placed in the hands of a group of men who have had distinguished careers in their fields, to be sure, but who are hardly known for their enthusiastic support of arms control negotiations. We, thus, would seem to be passing up opportunities to enhance our security in ways that could offer more long-term assurance than the addition of new weapons. We may be depriving ourselves of the one measure — that of bringing projected military spending down to reasonable levels — which seems to offer hope for the recovery of our economy.

WILLIAM C. FOSTER

(Mr. Foster was director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency from 1962 to 1969.)

Steady steps needed

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I read with great interest and considerable sympathy the article by Thomas Powers on "Principles of Abolition" [July 31]. Mr. Powers's central thesis, that countries should be prepared to forego nuclear weapons, seems to me unassailable. Certainly the contrary suppositions, that we must be able to use our nuclear arsenal to advance our foreign policy objectives, or that nuclear weaponry can serve to implement a policy of global Soviet containment, are not only ludicrous but reckless.

I wonder, however, whether abandoning the thus far glacially-paced arms control process for a campaign to abolish nuclear weapons holds any genuine promise in the current international regime. As Mr. Powers points out, no system of international inspection or control could prevent the renewed manufacture of nuclear weapons, nor do I believe that any foreseeable inspection or control system could confirm their complete nonexistence.

Accordingly, I think the better course is a steady, step-by-step development of a succession of arms control agreements that can control and preclude further qualitative "improvements" and effect significant quantitative reductions. The fact that the history of arms control has been largely "a history of failure" is not

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because effective, verifiable agreements cannot be fashioned but rather because the political support for such agreements has been weak and inconstant.

The best hope for averting the growing risk of nuclear war is prompt ratification of the SALT II treaty, and immediate efforts to restrict long-range theater forces in Europe and to provide for steady reductions in existing inventories.

The necessary framework is there and the negotiating process is available. All that is lacking is the political will to use it.

PAUL C. WARNKE

(Mr. Warnke was chief negotiator of SALT II, 1977-78.)

Personal commitment

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I read Thomas Powers's thoughtful piece, "Principles of Abolition: Eight Reasons for Getting Rid of the Bomb" with great interest. Powers is dead right that "a move in this direction away from war must be personal before it can be political." That's perhaps the best, if not the only note that can be struck in the terrible trough that we find ourselves in now, between the waves of arms control efforts of the sixties and seventies and, hopefully, those of the future.

But beyond the necessary millions of personal commitments, there remains the murky sphere of the means which will be available to the new abolitionists. As the Arabs would have it, "it takes two hands to clap." Powers quite poignantly points out, "We can never forget how to build nuclear weapons." That's the heart of the problem. Arnold Toynbee has said that the nation state cannot coexist with the split atom. It may be that the road to abolition of nuclear weapons must lie in the international political evolutions of a kind which we cannot now even imagine.

To my mind we must learn to live with the bomb, not just for tens of years or even centuries, but perhaps for millennia. But that is all the more reason for getting on with the process of controlling weapons—and in the meantime "let us pray."

GERARD C. SMITH

(Mr. Smith was chief negotiator of SALT I, 1970-73).

The 'food weapon'

New Brunswick, N.J.

To the Editors: The article by Franke and Chasin on "Africa's Other Famine" [July 3] provided a useful and clear summary of the long historical build-up of the Sahelian tragedy as well as a timely review of progress (or lack of it) in reconstructing the area since 1974. However, something more needs to be said. Are your readers aware of just how tenuous are the international aid commitments that support not only famine relief but the kinds of development work described in the article? *Even if* the "dilemmas" haunting Sahelian (and other Third World) development projects could be circumvented by "sound development policies," are such programs not increasingly vulnerable to the primitive and short-sighted foreign policy decisions of the West's neoconservative regimes? We should not forget that one of Mr. Reagan's first official acts was to cut contracted food aid shipments to Mozambique, followed in recent months by official blockage of humanitarian food and medical shipments by individual American citizens to Vietnam and cessation of food sales to Nicaragua.

Administration officials whose fingers are so quick on the trigger of the so-called "food weapon" are not likely to be the ones to puzzle through or to apply "sound development policies." It will be interesting to see if Mitterand's Sahelian reconstruction aid will take more of Franke and Chasin's "dilemmas" into account. However, the dominance of U.S. financial influence in those programs may well dilute any such attempts.

Personally, since visiting Somalia's refugee camps earlier this year, I am troubled by an even more serious possible nightmare. In Somalia much more than in the Sahel, the United States is providing a very large proportion of both food aid and reconstruction finance. The reasons for such "aid" are to be sought in the Pentagon's concept of Gulf and Indian Ocean strategy and in Reagan's support for a client Somalia juxtaposed to a Soviet-backed Ethiopia. A million Ethiopian refugees, mostly women and children, in Somali camps are thus vulnerable to the erratic policy of an administration that has used the "food weapon" at least three times in its first six months in office. What if both the Somali and the Ethiopian people tire, as is highly likely, more quickly than the Great Powers of the useless conflict in the Horn of Africa? Regimes in both Ethiopia and Somalia are very unstable. Can we count on U.S. food aid and reconstruction support for a future Somalia committed to deescalation of conflict in the Horn and to the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace?

BEN WISNER
Visiting Lecturer
Department of Human Ecology and Social Sciences, Cook College
Rutgers, The State University of N.J.

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